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LONDON BIRD REPORT 2009



LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



The Society publishes ornithological and other natural history records for the area within 20 miles of St Paul's Cathedral. As well as Ornithology, other interests in natural history are catered for through the Society's Sections which record and study the major groups of flora and fauna, and the habitats in which they are found. Meetings organised by each Section are open to all members.

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Further copies of this issue of the *London Bird Report* may be obtained (price £8.00 plus postage and packing) from:

Catherine Schmitt, 4 Falkland Avenue, London, N3 1QR.

Back numbers of most recent issues are also available from the same address. Cheques should be made payable to the London Natural History Society.

ISBN 0 901009 32 6

ISSN 0141 4348

Published by
the London Natural History Society - September 2012
www.lnhs.org.uk

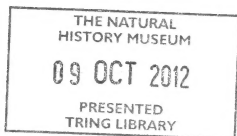
London Natural History Society
c/o The Linnean Society of London
Burlington House
Piccadilly
London, W1J 0BF

Front cover: Brown Shrike by Andrew Moon.

LONDON BIRD REPORT

NO.74 FOR THE YEAR 2009

PRODUCED BY THE LBR EDITORIAL BOARD



London
Natural
History
Society

PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 2012

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Goldcrest. (Jan Wilczur)

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Designed by Nigel Partridge

Printed on Regency Gloss & Satin 90, FSC® C023146, by
Swallowtail Print Limited, Norwich, Norfolk

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for those with a particular interest in birds.

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LONDON BIRD REPORT FOR 2009

This London Bird Report has been produced by an Editorial Board, comprising:

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| Data Manager | John Archer |
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| Editor: Photographs | Dominic Mitchell |
| Editors: Remaining sections | Pete Lambert |
| Production Manager | Gus Wilson |

Introduction

I'm sure you'll already have noticed the big change to the appearance of the report this year - colour throughout. This is more expensive than our old style, but I hope you will think, as we do, that it improves the appearance of the report. As always, your comments are welcome, especially any suggestions as to how we could improve things even more.

As mentioned in the introduction to *LBR 2008*, some amendments from previous years had to be held over to this report. They appear now as Appendix IV to the Systematic List (pages 178-181). We hope in future that amendments will appear within the Systematic List as normal.

The Editorial Board have been trying to make the Report reflect more the whole area of London, rather than the bird watching 'hot spots' in the area. After reflection, we would like to encourage people to tell us more about the status of each species within the areas they bird-watch. We have therefore made some changes to our Guide for Contributors of Ornithological Records this year.

We felt our previous guidance may have discouraged people from sending in records of some species seen. So we are introducing a new category called NR, where we would like to receive *all* records of that species, from any site where they are not recorded regularly. We hope that this change will encourage people to send in records like this, so that we have a more accurate picture of the status of birds at sites.

We have also withdrawn our minimum counts guidance, which affects a number of the more common species. Another concern is that people may not be sending in records of birds commonly seen at their sites because there was nothing particularly special to say about the bird. We are now asking people to send us a yearly note about the status at their site for some species (category ST).

Please read the new Guide (pages 231-240) carefully, before sending records to us in future. We don't see this as a definitive answer to some of the problems we're thinking about, so would welcome any thoughts from you on these changes.

In response to comments on the changes we made to the Contributors List in LBR 2008, we have reverted to the previous policy on abbreviations. We hope this meets with your approval.

We have also changed the names we use for three sites that feature regularly in the Report. These follow changes made by people using the sites. Amwell GP has become Amwell NR, Beddington SF has become Beddington Farmlands, and Kempton Park NR has become Kempton NR. There have also been some changes to the order of birds in the Birds of the London Area section of the report. This is because we are now following the 3rd Edition of *Birds of Britain: the Complete Checklist*, (Mitchell and Vinicombe, 2010), rather than the 2nd Edition, used in LBR 2008.

Jan Hewlett, the Editor of the Systematic List, stepped down from the Editorial Board this year. I would like to thank Jan for all the work she carried out for the London Bird Report since the Editorial Board was set up. This work was invaluable in helping us to make the progress we have made.

We have continued in this report to try to give more emphasis to the commoner birds of London, particularly where their status appears to be changing. More records or observations on commoner birds would be very welcome, especially estimates of breeding numbers. Please send any comments you have on the report to me; my contact details are below.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the London Natural History Society, I would like to thank the hundreds of individuals and organisations who have contributed records to this report.

I would also like to thank all those who helped with the production of the report: the 19 authors of the Systematic List (listed above); Jan Wilczur and Robert Callf for their illustrations; all the photographers who kindly donated their photos; Nigel Partridge, designer, who restyled the text, laid out the pages and gave valuable advice on the colour printing facility; and Andrew Verrall who proof-read the text. Thanks also to all the members of the Editorial Board.

I am particularly grateful to all the Recorders, who, in addition to the time-consuming tasks of inputting all the data for their area, checked the species accounts in the Systematic List and provided comments and corrections. Thanks also to Thames Water for the many courtesies extended to our members, and to the following organisations for their generous help in the exchange of records:

BirdGuides, British Birds Rarities Committee, British Trust for Ornithology,
Buckinghamshire Bird Club, East London Birders Forum,
Hertfordshire Natural History Society, Kent Ornithological Society,
Londonbirders Yahoo group, Surrey Bird Club

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RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

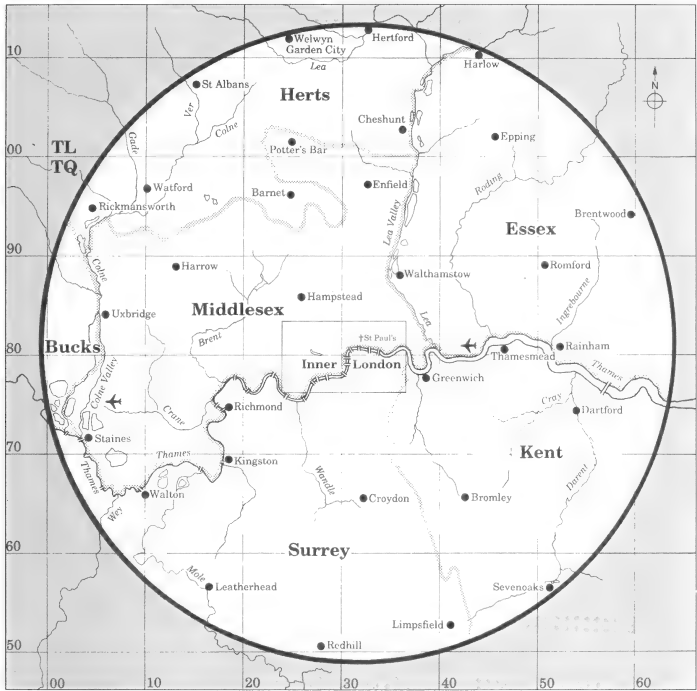
The London recording area covered by this Report, 'the London Area', lies within a 20-miles radius of St Paul's Cathedral. The Area covers the whole of Greater London and parts of Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent, Surrey, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. However, for continuity of recording, we still use the Watsonian vice-counties in this Report rather than the present administrative areas (but we combine vice-counties 18 and 19 as Essex). These vice-county boundaries are all shown on the map opposite. We also use a special recording zone for 'Inner London', which covers parts of Middlesex, Surrey and (just) Kent. This is a rectangular area, five miles north to south, eight miles east to west, centred on the site of the old Charing Cross on the south side of Trafalgar Square.

The names used in this Report for sites are listed in our Gazetteer of Sites (see below). A gazetteer including all site names used in this and previous issues of the *LBR* is kept and will be posted on the LNHS website. These site names may differ from those on OS maps. There has been confusion when people use different place names for the same site, so please use these site names if you can when sending in records. If you send in details from sites not listed in this or the online Gazetteer, please give an OS Grid Reference for the site.

All records are welcome, from LNHS members and non-members alike. We would particularly like information on the local status of common species, breeding records, notes on passage (including first and last dates and main movements), regular counts of wintering populations, notes on behaviour, as well as details of unusual birds. Many of the common birds in London are under-recorded. Regular reports from the same sites are a great help in seeing population trends, and such reports, along with comments on changes in status, are always very welcome. Our Guide for Contributors of Ornithological Records on pages 231 to 239, together with the Breeding Criteria on page 240 gives guidance on what information we would like for each species. Records should be sent to the appropriate Recorder listed on page 7 but if you are not sure which Recorder to send them to, contact the Chair of the *LBR* Editorial Board.

It would be very helpful if you could send in records on a spreadsheet; a sample and instructions are on our website (under 'Subject Group', then 'London's Birds', then 'LNHS Bird Recording Form'). Otherwise contact one of our Recorders or the Chair of the Editorial Board. It would also help if you list different species in the order used in this Report. Separate sheets should be used for each recording area.

Records of nationally rare species have to be considered by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee (BBRC). Their website (www.bbrc.org.uk) gives details. You should send these records as soon as possible after the sighting, with a copy to the relevant Recorder. Breeding records of rare species should be sent to the relevant Recorder. Details will then be sent to the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (www.rbbp.org.uk). Where requested, records will of course be treated in strict confidence. Records of other rare and unusual species in the London Area are considered by our Rarities Committee before being included in the *London Bird Report*. Species for which we need a full description or brief description/field notes are listed in the Guide for Contributors. Please send these as soon as possible after the sighting.



Ken Osborne

Gazetteer of Sites

The following gazetteer lists every site mentioned in this Report. Each site name is followed by the vice-county and an OS Grid Reference. This should help you to find the site on a map. The Grid Reference either refers to the centre of the site, or to a point of particular ornithological interest. Not all of these sites are open to the public; some are private, for some you need to have a permit. Contact the Chair of the Editorial Board if you need information on any site.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------|----------|---------------------------|------|----------|
| Abney Park Cemetery LNR | (MX) | TQ333868 | Bessels Green | (KT) | TQ505555 |
| Abridge | (EX) | TQ468968 | Bexley | (KT) | TQ495735 |
| Ainslie Wood | (EX) | TQ378920 | Bexleyheath | (KT) | TQ482757 |
| Albany Park | (KT) | TQ478728 | Bishopsgate | (IL) | TQ333815 |
| Aldenham Res | (HR) | TQ169955 | Black Park | (BU) | TQ010836 |
| Alexandra Park | (MX) | TQ302900 | Black Pond | (SY) | TQ128622 |
| Amwell NR | (HR) | TL378128 | Blackfan Wood | (HR) | TL315075 |
| Anton Crescent Wetlands | (SY) | TQ253652 | Blackheath | (KT) | TQ390766 |
| Arbrook Common | (SY) | TQ145630 | Blackshot's Field | (EX) | TQ628796 |
| Arthur Jacob NR | (BU) | TQ023758 | Bloomsbury | (IL) | TQ302820 |
| Ashtead Common | (SY) | TQ175595 | Bluewater Shopping Centre | (KT) | TQ580735 |
| Aveley Landfill | (EX) | TQ558812 | Bonnett's Wood | (EX) | TQ522842 |
| Banbury Res | (EX) | TQ362915 | Bookham Common | (SY) | TQ130565 |
| Bangors Park Farm | (BU) | TQ035824 | Borehamwood | (HR) | TQ195975 |
| Banstead | (SY) | TQ255593 | Botany Bay | (MX) | TQ297991 |
| Banstead Downs | (SY) | TQ252610 | Bottom Wood | (HR) | TQ021937 |
| Banstead Heath | (SY) | TQ235545 | Bow Creek Ecology Park | (EX) | TQ391811 |
| Banstead Wood | (SY) | TQ260560 | Bowyers Water | (HR) | TL368018 |
| Bara Hall Park | (MX) | TQ095810 | Boxer's Lake, Enfield | (MX) | TQ305962 |
| Barking Bay/Marsh | (EX) | TQ477820 | Brasted | (KT) | TQ473552 |
| Barking Outfall | (EX) | TQ455815 | Brent Res | (MX) | TQ215870 |
| Barking Park | (EX) | TQ448850 | Brickendonbury | (HR) | TL330104 |
| Barking Riverside | (EX) | TQ475822 | Bricket Wood Common | (HR) | TL130010 |
| Barwell Court Farm | (SY) | TQ170630 | Brightwells Farm | (HR) | TQ099946 |
| Batchworth Lake | (HR) | TQ058940 | Broad Colney Fields | (HR) | TL180030 |
| Batlers Green | (HR) | TQ158985 | Broad Colney Lakes | (HR) | TL178034 |
| Battersea Park | (IL) | TQ282772 | Broadwater Lake | (MX) | TQ045892 |
| Battersea Rise Cemetery | (IL) | TQ273749 | Brockley Cemetery | (KT) | TQ367749 |
| Bayford | (HR) | TL310084 | Brockley NR | (KT) | TQ363764 |
| Bayfordbury | (HR) | TL313108 | Bromley-by-Bow | (MX) | TQ380825 |
| Bayley's Hill | (KT) | TQ517519 | Broomkms Park | (HR) | TL245045 |
| Beckton District Park | (EX) | TQ419813 | Broomfield Park | (MX) | TQ304927 |
| Beckton SW | (EX) | TQ423813 | Broxbourne GP | (HR) | TL379078 |
| Beddington Farmlands | (SY) | TQ290662 | Broxbourne Woods | (HR) | TL340080 |
| Beddington Park | (SY) | TQ292654 | Bulphan Fen | (EX) | TQ633864 |
| Bedfont Lakes CP | (MX) | TQ078726 | Burgess Park | (IL) | TQ335778 |
| Bedfords Park | (EX) | TQ518925 | Burwood Park | (SY) | TQ100644 |
| Bedmond | (HR) | TL097037 | Bury Lake | (HR) | TQ053938 |
| Beech Farm GP | (HR) | TL190086 | Bushey Heath | (HR) | TQ153946 |
| Bethus Woods CP | (EX) | TQ575825 | Bushy Park | (MX) | TQ160690 |
| Bell Bar | (HR) | TL255050 | Camley St Natural Park | (IL) | TQ298836 |
| Bell Lane Fields | (HR) | TL198040 | Canning Town | (EX) | TQ405815 |
| Belvedere PS | (KT) | TQ499808 | Canons Farm | (SY) | TQ248577 |
| Bencroft Wood | (HR) | TL330064 | Carshalton | (SY) | TQ275645 |
| Bernards Heath | (HR) | TL155085 | Cassiobury Park | (HR) | TQ090970 |
| Berrybushes Wood | (HR) | TL069007 | Catford | (KT) | TQ385735 |
| Berrylands | (SY) | TQ192674 | Cely Woods | (EX) | TQ560834 |
| Berrygrove Wood | (HR) | TQ133981 | Chafford Hundred | (EX) | TQ605795 |
| Berwick Ponds | (EX) | TQ543835 | Chalfont Park | (BU) | TQ013896 |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|------|----------|--------------------------|------|----------|
| Chandlers Cross | (HR) | TQ064981 | Ditton Common | (SY) | TQ070530 |
| Charing Cross | (IL) | TQ302805 | Dulwich Park | (SY) | TQ335735 |
| Chase Farm Hospital | (MX) | TQ312981 | Dulwich Village | (SY) | TQ334739 |
| Chasemore Farm | (SY) | TQ119570 | Dunton Green | (KT) | TQ512574 |
| Chelsea Bridge | (IL) | TQ286778 | Durant's Park | (MX) | TQ357968 |
| Chelsfield | (KT) | TQ482642 | Dyrham Park | (HR) | TQ226985 |
| Cheshunt GPs | (HR) | TL370030 | Eagle Pond | (EX) | TQ390884 |
| Chessington | (SY) | TQ180635 | Earl's Court | (IL) | TQ255785 |
| Childerditch | (EX) | TQ610897 | East Croydon | (SY) | TQ328658 |
| Chingford Plain | (EX) | TQ397950 | East India Dock Basin | (MX) | TQ391808 |
| Chipping Ongar | (EX) | TL552040 | Ellenbrook Park | (HR) | TL210085 |
| Chipstead Lake | (KT) | TQ505565 | Elmbridge Leisure Centre | (SY) | TQ107678 |
| Chislehurst Cemetery | (KT) | TQ454712 | Elstree Aerodrome | (HR) | TQ158968 |
| Chiswell Green | (HR) | TL125047 | Enfield Playing Fields | (MX) | TQ355966 |
| Clapham Common | (SY) | TQ286748 | Enfield Town Park | (MX) | TQ326963 |
| Claybury Park | (EX) | TQ435912 | Epping Forest | (EX) | TQ420985 |
| Clissold Park | (MX) | TQ326864 | Epsom Common | (SY) | TQ190605 |
| Cole Green | (HR) | TL282114 | Esher Common | (SY) | TQ135625 |
| Cole Green Tip | (HR) | TL265112 | Essendon | (HR) | TL277087 |
| College Farm | (KT) | TQ492733 | Eynsford | (KT) | TQ540655 |
| Colnbrook | (BU) | TQ025775 | Fairlop Waters | (EX) | TQ459905 |
| Combe Wood | (HR) | TL189012 | Farthing Downs | (SY) | TQ299576 |
| Connaught Water | (EX) | TQ404953 | Ferry Hill Farm | (MX) | TQ282981 |
| Cornmill Meadows | (EX) | TL380011 | Finsbury Park | (MX) | TQ317875 |
| Corporation Island | (SY) | TQ176746 | Fishers Green | (EX) | TL378026 |
| Coursers Farm | (HR) | TL205046 | Fishpond Wood LNR | (SY) | TQ218709 |
| Coursers Road | (HR) | TL200040 | Folkestone Gardens | (KT) | TQ381778 |
| Covent Garden | (IL) | TQ303809 | Foots Cray Meadows | (KT) | TQ480715 |
| Crayford Marshes | (KT) | TQ532775 | Forty Hall, Enfield | (MX) | TQ337987 |
| Creekmouth, Barking | (EX) | TQ452827 | Frays Farm Meadows | (MX) | TQ058860 |
| Crockenhill | (KT) | TQ504671 | Frays Wildfowl Lake | (MX) | TQ056864 |
| Croham Hurst | (SY) | TQ337632 | Friday Lake | (HR) | TL371020 |
| Cromerhyde Farm | (HR) | TL211118 | Frogmore GP | (HR) | TL150033 |
| Crossness | (KT) | TQ478815 | Fryent CP | (MX) | TQ194874 |
| Croxley Green | (HR) | TQ070955 | Fulham FC | (IL) | TQ236766 |
| Croxley Moor | (HR) | TQ065956 | Gants Hill | (EX) | TQ432884 |
| Croydon Crematorium | (SY) | TQ306677 | Garden Wood | (HR) | TL194047 |
| Crystal Palace Park | (KT) | TQ347707 | Garsons Farm | (SY) | TQ125639 |
| Cudham | (KT) | TQ446596 | Garston | (HR) | TL110000 |
| Cuffley | (HR) | TL304026 | Gatton Park/Lake | (SY) | TQ271525 |
| Cummings Farm Res | (EX) | TQ534937 | Gidea Park | (EX) | TQ529892 |
| Dagenham Chase | (EX) | TQ514858 | Gillespie Park NR | (MX) | TQ314862 |
| Dagenham Riverside | (EX) | TQ489817 | Gobions Wood | (HR) | TL256035 |
| Dagnam Park | (EX) | TQ550933 | Golders Hill Park | (MX) | TQ257869 |
| Danemead Wood | (HR) | TL345078 | Goresbrook, Dagenham | (EX) | TQ486840 |
| Danson Park | (KT) | TQ473748 | Gough Park | (MX) | TQ333983 |
| Darent Valley Hospital | (KT) | TQ570730 | Grange Waters | (EX) | TQ609817 |
| Darlands Lake | (MX) | TQ243943 | Grays Cemetery | (EX) | TQ629787 |
| Dartford Marshes | (KT) | TQ544774 | Grays Chalk Pits | (EX) | TQ609788 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|----------|------------------------------|------|----------|
| Greatness Pits | (KT) | TQ535578 | Holyfield Lake | (EX) | TL378045 |
| Great Warley | (EX) | TQ582907 | Holyfield Marsh | (EX) | TL380049 |
| Greenhithe | (KT) | TQ585753 | Home Park | (MX) | TQ166676 |
| Greenland Dock | (IL) | TQ361791 | Hook | (SY) | TQ180645 |
| Greenland Pier | (IL) | TQ366793 | Hooks Marsh Lake | (EX) | TL373023 |
| Greensted | (EX) | TL537032 | Hornchurch CP | (EX) | TQ535825 |
| Greenwich Park | (KT) | TQ390775 | Horsenden Hill | (MX) | TQ162844 |
| Greenwich Peninsular | | | Horton CP | (SY) | TQ190627 |
| Ecology Park | (KT) | TQ400793 | Horton Farm | (SY) | TQ202625 |
| Grey Goose Farm | (EX) | TQ629807 | Horton GP | (BU) | TQ005753 |
| Grovelands Park | (MX) | TQ305944 | Horton Kirby | (KT) | TQ565686 |
| Haberdashers' Aske's School | (HR) | TQ168967 | Hounslow Heath | (MX) | TQ123745 |
| Hackney Marsh | (MX) | TQ366861 | How Wood | (HR) | TL144034 |
| Hainault Forest | (EX) | TQ476932 | Howe Green | (HR) | TL285094 |
| Hall Marsh Scrape | (EX) | TL373017 | Hunsdon Mead | (EX) | TL418108 |
| Hampermill Lake | (HR) | TQ095942 | Hunton Bridge | (HR) | TL082006 |
| Hampstead Heath | (MX) | TQ273866 | Hurst Park | (SY) | TQ143690 |
| Hampton Court Park | (MX) | TQ166676 | Hyde Park | (IL) | TQ270803 |
| Hampton FB | (MX) | TQ131693 | Ilford | (EX) | TQ433864 |
| Hangman's Wood | (EX) | TQ631793 | Ingrebourne Valley | (EX) | TQ538843 |
| Harlington Fields | (MX) | TQ092777 | Island Barn Res | (SY) | TQ140670 |
| Harperbury | (HR) | TL172018 | Isle of Dogs | (MX) | TQ385784 |
| Harold Hill | (EX) | TQ543920 | Isleworth Ait | (SY) | TQ167757 |
| Harrow Lodge Park | (EX) | TQ529865 | Iver Heath | (BU) | TQ033835 |
| Hastingwood | (EX) | TL486076 | Jersey Farm | (HR) | TL174097 |
| Hatfield Aerodrome | (HR) | TL205085 | Joyden's Wood | (KT) | TQ500715 |
| Hatfield Park | (HR) | TL240080 | Kelsey Manor | (KT) | TQ377688 |
| Hatton | (MX) | TQ097755 | Kempton NR | (MX) | TQ116706 |
| Havering CP | (EX) | TQ505930 | Kensington Gardens | (IL) | TQ270803 |
| Havering-atte-Bower | (EX) | TQ505930 | Kentish Town | (MX) | TQ292849 |
| Havering Plain | (EX) | TQ548947 | King George V Dock | (IL) | TQ432803 |
| Headley Heath | (SY) | TQ200535 | King George V Res | (EX) | TQ374964 |
| Heavers Meadow | (SY) | TQ335675 | King George VI Res | (MX) | TQ041732 |
| Helicon Lake | (HR) | TQ039909 | King George's Park | (SY) | TQ256737 |
| Hersham GP | (SY) | TQ128663 | King's College Sports Ground | (SY) | TQ204675 |
| Hertingfordbury | (HR) | TL305122 | King's Wood | (SY) | TQ352604 |
| Hertford Heath | (HR) | TL349107 | Kingston Cemetery | (SY) | TQ190687 |
| Highams Park | (EX) | TQ393922 | Kingston-upon-Thames | (SY) | TQ180690 |
| High Beach | (EX) | TQ407976 | Knighton Wood | (EX) | TQ409931 |
| Highfield Farm | (HR) | TL181054 | Ladywell Fields | (KT) | TQ377747 |
| Highgate Cemetery | (MX) | TQ285869 | Lake Farm CP | (MX) | TQ091803 |
| Hilfield Park Res | (HR) | TQ158959 | Lakeside Shopping Centre | (EX) | TQ582789 |
| Hilly Fields Park | (MX) | TQ323985 | Lakeside, Enfield | (MX) | TQ298963 |
| Hither Green Cemetery | (KT) | TQ398729 | Laleham Park | (MX) | TQ053680 |
| Hoddesdon | (HR) | TL365085 | Lambeth Bridge | (IL) | TQ304789 |
| Hoddesdonpark Wood | (HR) | TL352084 | Lambourne End | (EX) | TQ477946 |
| Hogsmill SW | (SY) | TQ197682 | Lamorby Park | (KT) | TQ465731 |
| Holmethorpe SP | (SY) | TQ295515 | Langley Park | (BU) | TQ013814 |
| Holyfield Hall Farm | (EX) | TL384038 | Lansdowne Green Estate, SW8 | (IL) | TQ295765 |

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|--------------------------|------|----------|------------------------|------|----------|
| Larkhall Park, Stockwell | (IL) | TQ299767 | Nashes Farm | (HR) | TL180096 |
| Larks Wood | (EX) | TQ382925 | Navestock Hall Farm | (EX) | TQ541985 |
| Leavesden Green | (HR) | TL097002 | Nazeing GP | (EX) | TL385072 |
| Lee Mouth | (MX) | TQ394807 | Netherhall GP | (EX) | TL394083 |
| Lee Valley Camp Site | (EX) | TQ380970 | Netherhouse Farm | (EX) | TQ387975 |
| Letchmore Heath | (HR) | TQ155977 | New Addington | (SY) | TQ385625 |
| Lewisham | (KT) | TQ385785 | New Malden | (SY) | TQ217682 |
| Leyton Flats | (EX) | TQ398867 | New Stables Farm | (KT) | TQ480603 |
| Limehouse Reach | (IL) | TQ368794 | Newgate Street | (HR) | TL302050 |
| Limpsfield Chart | (SY) | TQ445523 | Nine Elms | (IL) | TQ297777 |
| Lion Gorge | (EX) | TQ599786 | North Cray Wood | (KT) | TQ479721 |
| Lippitts Hill | (EX) | TQ396972 | North Feltham | (MX) | TQ108746 |
| Little Berkhamstead | (HR) | TL286077 | North Met Pit | (HR) | TL369033 |
| Little Britain Lake | (MX) | TQ049813 | North Mymms Park | (HR) | TL215045 |
| Little Venice | (IL) | TQ263818 | North Troy GP | (HR) | TQ038908 |
| Little Warley Common | (EX) | TQ601909 | Northaw Great Wood | (HR) | TL285044 |
| Little Woodcote | (SY) | TQ285615 | Northfleet | (KT) | TQ622749 |
| Littlebrook Lake | (KT) | TQ553756 | Northolt RAF Aerodrome | (MX) | TQ100850 |
| Littleton | (SY) | TQ077682 | North Watford | (HR) | TQ105989 |
| London Colney | (HR) | TL177040 | Oaks Park | (SY) | TQ275615 |
| London Wall | (IL) | TQ326815 | Oaklands College | (HR) | TL183077 |
| London Wetland Centre | (SY) | TQ228770 | Oakwood Park | (MX) | TQ302953 |
| Long Running | (EX) | TQ434988 | Old Dagenham Park | (EX) | TQ497842 |
| Loudwater | (HR) | TQ048963 | Old Slade Lake | (BU) | TQ040780 |
| Lullingstone Park | (KT) | TQ520645 | Orlitts North Lake | (BU) | TQ041780 |
| Lynsters Farm | (HR) | TQ034920 | Orlitts South Lake | (BU) | TQ039775 |
| Lynsters Lake | (HR) | TQ038916 | Orsett | (EX) | TQ635817 |
| Malden Rushett | (SY) | TQ169615 | Orsett Fen | (EX) | TQ628833 |
| Maple Cross | (HR) | TQ030925 | Osterley Park | (MX) | TQ145780 |
| Maple Lodge NR | (HR) | TQ036924 | Otford | (KT) | TQ525590 |
| Mar Dyke Valley | (EX) | TQ600805 | Otterspool | (HR) | TQ130988 |
| Marshalswick | (HR) | TL167089 | Oxhey Park | (HR) | TQ114955 |
| Mayesbrook Park | (EX) | TQ464846 | Oxshott Heath | (SY) | TQ139612 |
| Maylands Fields | (EX) | TQ562919 | Oylers Farm | (HR) | TL350005 |
| Merry Hill | (HR) | TQ136943 | Paddington Green | (IL) | TQ266818 |
| Merrymeade CP | (EX) | TQ600947 | Pages Wood | (EX) | TQ560895 |
| Micklefield Hall | (HR) | TL052973 | Panshanger Park | (HR) | TL283130 |
| Middlesex FB | (MX) | TQ359865 | Park Downs | (SY) | TQ267585 |
| Millbank | (IL) | TQ302786 | Park Farm, Chessington | (SY) | TQ181623 |
| Mill Wood | (EX) | TQ595788 | Park Farm, Enfield | (MX) | TQ292983 |
| Mitcham Common | (SY) | TQ290675 | Park Street GP | (HR) | TL149024 |
| Molesey Heath | (SY) | TQ132672 | Park Wood | (MX) | TQ092891 |
| Mollands Lane GPs | (EX) | TQ604820 | Parkside Farm/Res | (MX) | TQ303982 |
| Moor Mill | (HR) | TL145030 | Parsloes Park | (EX) | TQ480850 |
| Moor Park GC | (HR) | TQ075935 | Passingford Bridge | (EX) | TQ505975 |
| Morden Hall Park | (SY) | TQ264687 | Patchetts Green | (HR) | TQ145975 |
| Mores Plantation | (EX) | TQ562965 | Peckham Rye Park | (SY) | TQ348750 |
| Mudchute Farm | (EX) | TQ381786 | Perivale Wood | (MX) | TQ159836 |
| Munden Estate, Watford | (HR) | TL136001 | Perrots Farm | (SY) | TQ257576 |

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|--------------------------|------|----------|-------------------------------------|------|----------|
| Police Pit | (HR) | TL371025 | Shenleybury | (HR) | TL183019 |
| Ponders End Lake | (MX) | TQ362946 | Shepperton Green | (MX) | TQ072677 |
| Pond Wood | (HR) | TL279006 | Shreding Green | (BU) | TQ022808 |
| Portsmouth Rd FB | (SY) | TQ173675 | Sidcup | (KT) | TQ465725 |
| Potters Bar | (MX) | TL247011 | Slipe Lane GPs | (HR) | TL370049 |
| Potters Crouch | (HR) | TL116052 | Smallford GP | (HR) | TL198071 |
| Prae Wood | (HR) | TL121068 | Smug Oak | (HR) | TL140020 |
| Prince's Coverts | (SY) | TQ160610 | Soho | (IL) | TQ295810 |
| Purley Beeches | (SY) | TQ330619 | Sopwell Mill | (HR) | TL154054 |
| Pymmes Park | (MX) | TQ337928 | South Lodge Farm | (MX) | TQ299964 |
| Pynesfield North Lake | (HR) | TQ036912 | South Darenth | (KT) | TQ565700 |
| Queen Elizabeth II Res | (SY) | TQ120670 | South Mimms | (HR) | TL222014 |
| Queen Mary GP | (MX) | TQ059700 | South Norwood CP | (SY) | TQ353684 |
| Queen Mary Res | (MX) | TQ070695 | South Oxendon | (EX) | TQ592818 |
| Queen Mother Res | (BU) | TQ017773 | South Park | (EX) | TQ452863 |
| Queens Promenade | (SY) | TQ177679 | Southall | (MX) | TQ120800 |
| Rabley Park Farm | (HR) | TL206013 | Southgate | (MX) | TQ305940 |
| Radlett Aero GP | (HR) | TL155035 | Southmere Lake | (KT) | TQ476801 |
| Rainham Marshes | (EX) | TQ525800 | Southwark Park | (IL) | TQ352789 |
| Raynes Park | (SY) | TQ231684 | Springfield Park | (MX) | TQ346874 |
| Redwell Wood Farm | (HR) | TL207026 | St Albans | (HR) | TL155070 |
| Regent's Park | (IL) | TQ281828 | St Andrew's Church, Enfield Town | (MX) | TQ327966 |
| Richmond Park | (SY) | TQ200730 | St Anns Hill | (SY) | TQ038674 |
| Rickmansworth Aquadrome | (HR) | TQ057940 | St Georges Hospital, Hornchurch | (EX) | TQ539854 |
| Ridding Lane OS | (MX) | TQ157854 | St George's Wharf, Vauxhall | (IL) | TQ304780 |
| Riddlesdown | (SY) | TQ326602 | St James's Park | (IL) | TQ294798 |
| River Pool Linear Park | (KT) | TQ372725 | St Mary's Church, Bexley | (KT) | TQ497734 |
| Roding Valley Meadows NR | (EX) | TQ430943 | Staines Moor | (MX) | TQ033734 |
| Roding Valley Park | (EX) | TQ412902 | Staines Res | (MX) | TQ051731 |
| Roe Hyde | (HR) | TL215070 | Stanborough Lakes | (HR) | TL230108 |
| Romford | (EX) | TQ515896 | Stanford Rivers | (EX) | TL534009 |
| Rotherhithe | (IL) | TQ358794 | Stanstead Abbotts GP | (HR) | TL391109 |
| Royal Albert Dock | (EX) | TQ425807 | Stanwell Moor | (MX) | TQ040743 |
| Royal Gunpowder Mills | (EX) | TL376014 | Stapleford Tawney | (EX) | TQ503900 |
| Roydon | (EX) | TL410100 | Stocker's Farm | (HR) | TQ052933 |
| Rushett Farm | (SY) | TQ173608 | Stocker's Lake | (HR) | TQ046935 |
| Rush Green | (HR) | TL350127 | Stockwell | (MX) | TQ302759 |
| Ruxley GP | (KT) | TQ473700 | Stoke Newington Res | (MX) | TQ326876 |
| Rye Meads RSPB | (HR) | TL383103 | Stone | (KT) | TQ576746 |
| Salisbury Hall Farm | (HR) | TL195028 | Strawberry Hill Ponds | (EX) | TQ412968 |
| Sanderstead Plantation | (SY) | TQ343618 | Sundridge Park | (KT) | TQ416706 |
| Sanderstead Pond | (SY) | TQ340613 | Surbiton Cemetery | (SY) | TQ192682 |
| Savay Lake | (MX) | TQ049880 | Sutcliffe Park | (KT) | TQ411748 |
| Scadbury Park | (KT) | TQ455700 | Sutton at Hone Lakes | (KT) | TQ560700 |
| Scotsbridge Mill | (HR) | TQ064951 | Sutton Ecology Centre | (SY) | TQ278646 |
| Selsdon Park | (SY) | TQ350615 | Swanley Bar | (MX) | TL256030 |
| Sevenoaks WR | (KT) | TQ522570 | Swanscombe Marshes | (KT) | TQ605760 |
| Seventy Acres Lake | (HR) | TL374030 | | | |
| Shenley | (HR) | TL192004 | | | |

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|-----------------------------|------|----------|--------------------------|------|----------|
| Sybound School | (EX) | TQ368876 | Wandsworth Common | (SY) | TQ275740 |
| Symondshyde Great Wood | (HR) | TL195110 | Wanstead Flats | (EX) | TQ410864 |
| Tandridge | (SY) | TQ376505 | Wanstead Park | (EX) | TQ415875 |
| Tate Modern | (IL) | TQ320804 | Warren Gorge | (EX) | TQ597794 |
| Terrace Fields | (SY) | TQ183739 | Water End | (HR) | TL231042 |
| Terrells Heath Wood | (EX) | TQ638792 | Waterlow Park | (MX) | TQ286872 |
| Thames Barrier | (EX) | TQ415795 | Watermeads | (SY) | TQ274677 |
| Thames Ditton | (SY) | TQ166670 | Waterworks NR | (EX) | TQ363868 |
| The Ledges, Esher | (SY) | TQ122628 | Watford | (HR) | TQ105975 |
| The Oaks Farm, Carshalton | (SY) | TQ273610 | Weald Bridge | (EX) | TL510064 |
| Theobalds Park | (HR) | TL345005 | Weald Brook | (EX) | TQ570945 |
| Theydon Bois | (EX) | TQ455990 | Weald Park | (EX) | TQ572945 |
| Theydon Garnon | (EX) | TQ470992 | Welham Green | (HR) | TL235055 |
| Thorndon CP | (EX) | TQ608915 | Well End | (HR) | TQ204895 |
| Thorpe Water Park | (SY) | TQ030681 | Wennington | (EX) | TQ540809 |
| Thurrock Rugby Club | (EX) | TQ634802 | West End Common | (SY) | TQ125632 |
| Titsey | (SY) | TQ409551 | West End, Essendon | (HR) | TL263082 |
| Titsey Hill | (SY) | TQ405555 | West Ewell | (SY) | TQ210637 |
| Tolworth Court Farm | (SY) | TQ200650 | West Ham Park | (EX) | TQ400842 |
| Tooting Common | (SY) | TQ293720 | West Horndon | (EX) | TQ623883 |
| Tottenham Marshes | (MX) | TQ354910 | West Hyde Fields | (HR) | TQ030910 |
| Totteridge Valley | (MX) | TQ244952 | West Thurrock Marshes | (EX) | TQ583767 |
| Tower 42 | (IL) | TQ331813 | Weston Green | (SY) | TQ156662 |
| Tower Bridge | (IL) | TQ337802 | Westminster Bridge | (IL) | TQ305796 |
| Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park | (MX) | TQ370823 | Whippendell Wood | (HR) | TQ075980 |
| Town Park, Enfield | (MX) | TQ325963 | Whitewebbs Wood | (MX) | TQ325995 |
| Trent Park | (MX) | TQ290970 | Whyteleafe | (SY) | TQ340584 |
| Trevereux | (SY) | TQ433509 | Widdrington Farm | (EX) | TQ534938 |
| Troy Mill Lake | (HR) | TQ039905 | Wildhill | (HR) | TL264067 |
| Tykeswater Lake | (HR) | TQ172962 | William Girling Res | (EX) | TQ367945 |
| Tylers Common | (EX) | TQ568907 | Willowbank | (MX) | TQ057853 |
| Tylers Hall Farm | (EX) | TQ563908 | Willowmead | (HR) | TL317122 |
| Tyttenhanger GP | (HR) | TQ191052 | Willows Farm | (HR) | TL189041 |
| Upminster | (EX) | TQ560865 | Wimbledon Common | (SY) | TQ247723 |
| Upshire | (EX) | TL414014 | Winchfield Wood | (HR) | TL178062 |
| Valentines Park | (EX) | TQ438878 | Winterhouse Farm | (SY) | TQ121636 |
| Vauxhall Bridge | (IL) | TQ303781 | Woodford Green | (EX) | TQ401920 |
| Vauxhall Park | (IL) | TQ304776 | Woodlands Park Lake | (BU) | TQ042828 |
| Verulamium Park | (HR) | TL138069 | Woodmansterne | (SY) | TQ276597 |
| Vicarage Farm | (MX) | TQ305975 | Woodoaks Farm | (HR) | TQ033933 |
| Victoria | (IL) | TQ289780 | Woodside | (HR) | TL255068 |
| Victoria Park | (IL) | TQ363840 | Woolwich Ferry | (EX) | TQ434793 |
| Waddon Ponds | (SY) | TQ309650 | Worcester Park former SW | (SY) | TQ230665 |
| Waltham Abbey Woods | (EX) | TL381015 | Wormwood Scrubs | (MX) | TQ221818 |
| Walthamstow FB | (EX) | TQ355883 | Wraysbury GP | (BU) | TQ015735 |
| Walthamstow Res | (EX) | TQ353890 | Wraysbury Res | (MX) | TQ025745 |
| Walton Res | (SY) | TQ122685 | Yiewsley Lake | (MX) | TQ050804 |

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2009

The highlight of the year for many birders was the long-staying and relatively obliging Brown Shrike at Staines Moor from late autumn, the first for the London Area and the ninth for Britain and Ireland. The first Black Kite for the Area since 2004 was recorded, as was the fourth Glossy Ibis. Other scarcities included White-winged Black Tern, Caspian Gull, Spotted Crake, Alpine Swift, Wryneck, Red-rumped Swallow, Savi's Warbler, Yellow-browed Warbler, Siberian Chiffchaff, Penduline Tit, Great Grey Shrike and Serin.

In the first winter period, Bittern were recorded at 14 sites. Extremely cold weather in January was followed by snow in February. The weather contributed to good numbers of Common Snipe and Redwing. Iceland and Glaucous Gulls were recorded. Waxwings remained until April, while two Penduline Tits remained at Rainham. The first Whooper Swans since 2006 were recorded, whereas numbers of White-fronted Goose were well down on 2008. Long-eared Owls were recorded at Osterley Park and at Beddington. A maximum of 23 Jack Snipe were recorded in January.

A warm, dry and sunny spring brought good numbers of Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit and Green Sandpiper. Great Egret and Purple Heron were seen, as well as Spoonbill and White Stork. Typical numbers of Yellow Wagtail appeared in spring, and also in autumn. Common Redstart numbers were slightly down on the previous year in both spring and autumn, whereas Whinchat numbers were up in both periods. Spring passage of Ring Ouzel was very poor, but numbers returned to normal in autumn. Sand Martin numbers in spring were down on the preceding year and Northern Wheatear numbers continued the pattern of lower spring numbers. Very few Spotted Flycatchers were seen in spring, whereas Pied Flycatcher numbers were similar to previous years.

Culling continued to take its toll of Ruddy Ducks, with both wintering and breeding numbers down. In contrast, many wildfowl enjoyed good breeding seasons, with breeding pairs of Greylag Goose, Shelduck, Mandarin Duck, Mute Swan and Common Pochard increasing. Inner London breeding records included Tufted Duck in Regent's Park, Common Pochard and Gadwall in Battersea Park, and Egyptian Geese for the first time in St James's Park and on Hampstead Heath. Garganey were suspected of an unsuccessful breeding attempt. Over 500 Grey Heron nests were



Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir can, like other large water bodies, attract passerine migrants as well as waterbirds. This Yellow Wagtail Motacilla flava was present there on 14 September. (Dave Harris)



Numbers of Northern Lapwing Vanellus vanellus build up in winter, when there can be significant hard-weather movements. These birds were braving the elements at Barking outfall just before Christmas. (David Morrison)

recorded; rather surprisingly, Little Egret records for the year were down, although breeding was recorded at two sites. Great Crested Grebe breeding pairs increased slightly, while Little Grebes were slightly down. At least 13 Black-necked Grebes fledged from nine broods.

Red Kites continued their increase, with Hertfordshire as the stronghold. Common Buzzard also increased, with at least 61 pairs in the breeding season, compared with 38 in 2008 and 16 in 2007. Nineteen pairs of Peregrine Falcons attempted to breed, with 11 juveniles successfully fledged. There were 40 proved or probable breeding attempts of Hobby, close to the record of 41 from 2006. While Osprey numbers were down on the preceding year, the total was still the second best for the Area, and it was probably the best year yet for Marsh Harriers.

Waders fared less well, with only one confirmed breeding pair of Oystercatcher, and a further decline in breeding pairs of Northern Lapwing and Redshank. Fifteen pairs of Little Ringed Plover were recorded as confirmed or probable breeders.

Kingfishers also had a poor breeding year. There were no confirmed breeding records of Woodlark, Long-eared Owl or Dartford Warbler. Nightingales were recorded in 17 territories, a reduction on 2008 numbers. European Stonechat numbers were well down, as were probable breeding records of Firecrest. However, Black Redstart was recorded at more sites, including ten possible breeding sites in Inner London. Spotted Flycatcher breeding numbers were slightly down on the previous year, while Reed Bunting, Nuthatch and Treecreeper all recorded lower breeding numbers. Probably only two pairs of Marsh Tit bred.

Numbers of Yellow-legged Gulls peaked from July to September but continued to decline from the two previous years.



Jack Snipe. (Jan Wilczur)

Autumn saw a series of reports of Montagu's Harrier in August and September. Numbers of Spotted Redshank were down on the two preceding years, and only two Bar-tailed Godwits were recorded. However, passage of Green Sandpiper was strong. Three species of Skua (Arctic, Great and Long-tailed) were seen. The Rainham/Crossness area produced a series of good sightings of seabirds, including Common Guillemot and Puffin in September and a juvenile Sabine's Gull in October. The first Leach's Storm-petrel since 2006 was seen at Staines, and a Manx Shearwater reached Greenhithe. Shag numbers were the lowest since 2004. Only one Lapland Bunting and two Snow Buntings were recorded this year. Jack Snipe counts peaked at 17 in October.

The second winter period saw Bittern reported from eight sites. Three records of Bewick's Swan was about average for recent years. A count at the Wetland Centre disclosed an impressive 41 wintering Water Rails. One or two Serin appeared at Rainham, where a single Twite was also seen. Five Smew were recorded at Wraysbury GP, and there were two unseasonable Ospreys in November. No Waxwings or Penduline Tits were recorded in this period. Snow and cold weather returned in December.

Good numbers of Scaup and Common Scoter were recorded for the year. Common Terns had a poor year, both for breeding and passage; overall, passage of Arctic Terns was also below average, as a result of a poor showing in autumn. Little Terns were well below 2008 numbers and Black Terns failed to reach the record set in 2008, though numbers were above 2007 and 2006 levels. Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers were recorded from 55 sites over the year, a drop from 88 in 2008. Kittiwake numbers were well down on the previous year.

January: The year started with two Penduline Tits remaining at Rainham, where they were seen until February 11th. A Siberian Chiffchaff was at Stoke Newington from 1st to

6th, with another at Rainham from 14th to 30th. An over-wintering Lesser Whitethroat was seen at Seventy Acres Lake on 2nd. Waxwings remained from the 2008 invasion, and were seen at 17 sites from January to late April. In a good month for gulls, a juvenile Iceland Gull was at Beddington, the returning adult Ring-billed Gull was at Isle of Dogs on 1st, and a Mediterranean Gull was at Kensington Gardens on the same date. High counts of waders during the month included 3,000 Dunlin at West Thurrock on 3rd and 459 Black-tailed Godwit at Rainham on 26th. West Thurrock also saw the year's peak count of Avocet, with 52 on 11th. A Spotted Crake was an unusual winter record at Warren Gorge. Grebes were also in good numbers, with 160 Great Crested Grebes at Q. Mary Res and 24 Black-necked Grebe at William Girling. A single Slavonian Grebe was also seen, on 1st at KGV Res. Eight Smew were at Wraybury GP on 4th, while one was seen in Hyde Park on 11th. A single Red-breasted Merganser was at KGV Res on 2nd, where it stayed until March. Counts of the commoner wildfowl species included 63 Common Goldeneye at KGV Res and 62 at Wraybury GP, 1,430 Tufted Duck at Q. Mother Res and 750 Common Teal at Crossness LNR. Shoveler numbered 265 at Creekmouth, Barking and 234 at Staines, which also saw a count of 457 Common Pochard. Seventeen Red-crested Pochard were at Bury Lake on 8th, while relatively high numbers of Scaup included seven at Q. Mother Res on 17th. Winter predators included a Great Grey Shrike at Cuffley from 9th to 12th. There was an exceptional count of 402 Greylag Geese at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 10th.

February: A Great Northern Diver visited Stoke Newington Res on 4th, representing the first record for the site. On 7th, at least 24 Grey Partridges were seen at Redwell Wood Farm. Eurasian Wigeon numbers peaked at 1,002 at Rainham, while 204 Shoveler at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens was a good count for Inner London. Smew numbers at Wraybury had risen to ten on 8th, with a red-head appearing on 27th in Regent's Park, where it remained until late March. Counts of finches included 68 Chaffinch in Regent's Park on 15th, 150 Lesser Redpoll at Thornton CP on 14th and 120 Siskin at Amwell NR on 7th. Four to five Mealy Redpoll were at the Wetland Centre from 13th to 20th. Up to five Long-eared Owls were at Beddington Farmlands during the month. Twenty-five Goosander were seen at Turnford Marsh on 21st. Cold weather brought a count of 150 Common Snipe at Rainham on 22nd where a Little Stint was also seen, having appeared on the previous day. Three White-fronted Geese at Ingrebourne Valley on 26th were the first sightings in a poor year for the species, with none in the second winter period.

March: Two Slavonian Grebes remained at KGV Res on 1st from late February and one was seen at QE II Res on 13th. Nine Black-necked Grebes also remained at Staines from February, while at Site A in Hertfordshire 29 were counted on 28th. The only Grey Phalarope of the year was at KGV Res from 6th-8th. Numbers of Common Goldeneye built up to 67 at Wraybury with 60 at Staines Res. Hen Harriers were at Q. Mother Res on 10th-12th. An unusual record was a Pheasant in Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens from 16th-20th, though perhaps even more unexpected was an exhausted Woodcock at Old Street in the City on 15th. Juvenile and second-winter Glaucous Gulls were at Rainham Marshes from 9th-21st. Spring migration began with a Northern Wheatear at East India Dock Basin on 1st. Other early records were Sand Martin at Belhus Woods CP on 5th, with the first House Martins over the Thames at Portsmouth Rd FB on 17th and Swallow at Beddington on 18th. A Nightingale at Hatfield Park on 13th was an early record, and the year's first Willow

Warbler was at Wanstead on 5th. Three White-fronted Geese were seen at Rainham and Crossness on 29th. A Penduline Tit was at Rainham on 29th. The first Garganey were recorded on 29th, when a pair were seen at Brent Res.

April: Winter visitors departed, with the last records of Brambling seen on 19th, Jack Snipe on 20th, Fieldfare on 22nd and Redwing on 29th. The last Goosander was seen on 15th. Meanwhile, summer visitors arrived in force, with an influx of Nightingales noted on 8th and Swallows on 10th. The first Ring Ouzel on 6th was rather late: the main arrival was between 14th and 19th. The first two weeks saw the first arrivals of many species of warbler; a notable arrival on 30th was a Savi's Warbler singing at Seventy Acres Lake, where it remained until June 1st. A Hawfinch on 5th at Regent's Park was a notable record for Inner London, as was a European Stonechat at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 15th. The first Common Redstart was seen on 6th, with the first Whinchat on 18th and the first Common Swift on 10th. Noteworthy arrivals included Wrynecks at Hainault Forest and Purfleet on 25th, a Spotted Crake at Fairlop Waters on 2nd and five Velvet Scoter at Staines Res on 13th. Scarcer herons included Great Egrets on 5th at Ilford and 14th at Rainham; Purple Herons at Walthamstow Res from 23-25th, Crossness (staying until 27th) and Staines on 26th; and an adult Spoonbill at Rainham on 28th. White Storks were seen

Crossness has established a reputation in recent years as something of a south London rarity hot-spot, and this fine Purple Heron Ardea purpurea in late April did nothing to diminish its standing. (John Archer)



at Holyfield Hall Farm on 25th and Canning Town on 28th. Four Garganey were at Rainham, where 24 Common Scoter were seen on 11th - part of a total of 43 seen across five sites on that day. The last Merlin of the spring was at Rainham on 11th. The first Black Kite for the London Area since 2004 was at Stoke Newington Res on 13th, while a good year for Ospreys saw one over Regent's Park on 26th. An influx of Greenshank on 25th-26th saw 35 recorded at Rainham on the latter date; 51 Little Gulls were at Staines on 20th, but passage of terns was generally poor. The month saw a small influx of Short-eared Owls. Typical numbers of Yellow Wagtails were noted; a Blue-headed Wagtail was at Rainham on 27th. A Bittern was recorded booming at Amwell NR.

May: As numbers of common migrants were joined by later arrivals, scarcer species also appeared. Black Kite sightings were reported between 3rd and 9th. In Inner London, Hobbys were seen at Paddington Green on 3rd and Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 4th. More Spoonbills were seen, with three at Rainham on 6th. Another White Stork was recorded on 5th. Twelve Bar-tailed Godwits at Rainham on 13th made up the largest group of the year, while an unexpected sighting was a Dunlin in Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 15th. Two Curlew Sandpiper were at Barking Riverside on 14th, when one was also recorded at Rainham; it remained until the following day and was later noted on 31st. In a poor year for Common Terns, 115 at Staines on 1st was the largest single count; coincidentally, 115 Black Terns were recorded in total across various sites on the peak day of their passage, the 13th. A second-summer White-winged Black Tern was at Staines from 11th-13th. Other scarce migrants included a Red-rumped Swallow on 9th, Blue-headed Wagtails on 7th and 20th, and a Grey-headed Wagtail on 30th. A further record of a booming Bittern came from Cheshunt GPs.

June: Three Common Crossbill were recorded at Burgess Park on 3rd, while a Little Stint was at Belhus Woods CP on the same date. An Inner London record of Hobby came from Vauxhall on 14th, while a Honey Buzzard was seen at Alexandra Park on 3rd. Two Quail were recorded at Otford on 16th, and a further two were at Beech Farm GP on 26th. A Grasshopper Warbler at Wimbledon Common on 22nd was the first there for over 20 years.

July: Little Egrets numbered 26 at Rainham on 3rd. Return wader passage saw 49 Black-tailed Godwit at Staines Res on 8th, while a Little Stint was at Q. Mother Res on 21st. Numbers of Yellow-legged Gulls grew, though numbers were down on the previous two years. Quail records continued with one from 18th-24th at Orsett. The first returning Northern Wheatear was recorded on 31st, while an impressive passage of Common Swifts on 30th saw some 6,000 flying west in an hour at KGVI Res on 30th.

August: High counts of ducks during the month included 300 Gadwall at Rye Meads, 200 Common Pochard at Hilfield Park Res and 971 Tufted Duck at KGVI Res. A Purple Heron was at the Wetland Centre on 1st, and three Common Crossbills were at Regent's Park on 2nd. The peak autumn passage of Black Terns was recorded on 6th, with a total of 90 including 54 at Q. Mother Res. A White-winged Black Tern followed at Staines on 7th. Five Garganey were at Rye Meads on 9th, and 18 Little Egrets were at William Girling Res. An Inner London Tree Pipit was recorded at Regent's Park on 18th and records there continued until Sep 11th. Wader sightings included a Curlew Sandpiper at Staines on 3rd and 5th, single Spotted Redshanks on 23rd at Holyfield Marsh and Beddington and on 26th at Rainham, and four Wood Sandpiper at Beddington on 24th. Counts of Black-tailed

Godwits included 27 at Swanscombe on 7th and 36 at Rainham on 24th. The Ring-billed Gull was seen again at the Isle of Dogs on 17th, and an adult (perhaps a different bird) was seen at Greenwich on 22nd. The year's only Arctic Skua was at Q. Mother Res on 25th, and 14 Sandwich Terns flying south over Alexandra Park were an unusual sighting on 26th. Passage of Pied Flycatchers was concentrated between Aug 21st and Sep 27th, while three Spotted Flycatchers were in Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 12th. Wandering raptors included a Honey Buzzard at Rainham on 23rd and a male Montagu's Harrier there on 24th-25th. A Wryneck appeared at Q. Mary Res on 25th and remained until Sep 5th. A Black-necked Grebe was at William Girling Res on 28th and a Slavonian Grebe was at KGV Res on 31st. The first autumn sighting of Merlin was at Staines Moor on 29th. The end of the month saw a count of 250 Goldfinches at Wormwood Scrubs.

September: On 2nd, a high count of 13 Whinchats was recorded at Rainham. Hobbies were at Regent's Park on five dates between 2nd and 20th, including two on 6th. The year's first Shag was at KGV Res on 3rd, followed by another record on 13th at Walthamstow Res. A Quail was recorded at Colnbrook from 5th-6th. An Alpine Swift was at Aldenham Res on 5th and at Alexandra Park on 6th. The main autumn passage of Swallows occurred from 6th-8th, with an impressive total of 700 counted at Q. Mary Res on 16th. On 10th, three Spotted Flycatchers were in Regent's Park, while a Pied Flycatcher was in Victoria Park on 7th and another at Rotherhithe on 25th. The last Little Ringed Plovers of the year were recorded at Q. Mother Res on 10th. A Spotted Crane was recorded on 13th at the Wetland Centre, where it stayed until Oct 9th. Single Little Stints were at Beddington on 14th-18th, and at Rainham on 16th. On 14th, six Eurasian Wigeon flew west past Fulham Football Club. Nine Pink-footed Geese flew north on 16th at Chafford Hundred. A male Common Scoter was at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 17th; on the same date, the year's only Common Guillemot was on the Thames at Rainham and Crossness, while a Puffin was on the Thames at Rainham on 23rd. Two Woodlarks were recorded in Regent's Park on 18th with further records there until Oct 18th. The last Common Swifts of the year were recorded at Horton GP on 20th. A Long-tailed Skua was at KGVI Res on 20th, and a Glossy Ibis was at Tyttenhanger GP on 21st. A Yellow-browed Warbler was at the Wetland Centre from 20th-25th, and a Great Egret was there on 24th. A Honey Buzzard was at Alexandra Palace on 19th, and a Hen Harrier at Rainham on 27th. The last Garden Warbler was recorded at the Wetland Centre on 29th, and the last Common Whitethroat was at Wormwood Scrubs on 30th. The first Redwings of the second winter period were at the Wetland Centre on 25th. On 30th, the year's only Leach's Storm-petrel was at Staines Res.

October: Last records of summer visitors included Sand Martin (4th), Willow Warbler (4th), Grasshopper Warbler (4th), Cuckoo (5th), Lesser Whitethroat (8th), Sedge Warbler (10th), Common Redstart (14th), Whinchat (18th), Turtle Dove (20th), Northern Wheatear (26th) and Reed Warbler (27th). The autumn's first Jack Snipe was seen on 2nd. On 4th, a juvenile Red-necked Grebe was at Staines Res. The first Ring Ouzel on return passage was seen on 5th, while the first Fieldfare of the second winter period was seen on 4th. An estimated three Gannets were seen on 5th and 6th. On 7th, 315 Greylag Geese were at Sevenoaks WR, and on the same date the year's only Sabine's Gull was at Rainham/Crossness. On 8th, ten Grey Partridge were recorded at Panshanger and the

first Brambling of the winter was at the Wetland Centre. On 10th, a Pink-footed Goose was recorded at Rainham Marshes. An ill-fated Manx Shearwater was at Greenhithe/Northfleet on 11th. A highlight was provided by the long-staying Brown Shrike found at Staines Moor on 11th; on 13th, a Great Grey Shrike was recorded at the same site. A Rock Pipit in Regent's Park on 17th was unusual. An adult Whooper Swan was at Walthamstow Res from 13th-29th, then at Tottenham Marshes for the last two days of the month. The first returning Goosander was recorded on 14th. A Garganey, first seen at KGV Res on 18th, proved to be the last of the year when last seen on 31st. Mealy Redpolls were seen from 18th. A Snow Bunting was at Beddington on 20th, while an Inner London Reed Bunting was at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 18th, with further records later in the month and early the next. On 25th, a Great Skua was at Amwell NR, while on 27th-28th a Spotted Crake was at Rainham. A Little Gull at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 29th was a good Inner London record. Movements of Wood pigeons were recorded on 30th, with a total of 7,110 counted at eight sites. Counts of migrating Redwings included 2,000 on 13th and 28th, and 3,000 on 17th. The only Lapland Bunting of the year was at Rainham on 30th.

November: Thirty Brent Geese were at QE II Res on 1st. On 2nd, a Little Stint was at Rainham. On 3rd, 57 Egyptian Geese were counted at Regent's Park, while 90 Long-tailed Tits were recorded at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens. Hen Harriers were recorded at Rainham on 4th and 15th. A late Osprey record was of one over Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 5th. Further Woodpigeon counts on 5th totalled 8,122 over four sites, while 1,251 Stock Doves were at Woodoaks Farm on 11th. A Yellow-browed Warbler was at Redlands on 8th. A Slavonian Grebe was at Wraysbury on 8th, when a Red-necked Grebe was found at Q. Mother Res, staying until 25th. A Snow Bunting was at Rainham on 9th while the year's only Twite was there from 11th-21st. One to two Serins were at Rainham from 21st through to Dec 5th. As wildfowl numbers built up, high counts included 158 Mandarin Duck at Grovelands Park on 19th, 16 Red-crested Pochard at Bury Lake/Stockers Lake on 10th, and 1,005 Tufted Duck at Wraysbury GP on 24th. Scarcer wildfowl included four Scaup on the Serpentine on 11th and two Red-breasted Merganser at KGV Res on 15th. On 27th, a juvenile Shag was at Bromley-by-Bow. Seven Great Northern Divers were recorded over this month and the next.

December: Thirteen Black-necked Grebes were recorded at William Girling Res during the month. On 4th, 41 Water Rails were counted at the Wetland Centre. On 9th, a Slavonian Grebe was at Q. Mother Res, while another was recorded at Fairlop Waters on 20th. Five Smew were recorded at Wraysbury GP on 14th and on the same day a Hen Harrier was at Rainham. On 16th and 20th, a Siberian Chiffchaff was at Wraysbury GP. High counts of Skylark were recorded at Rainham (238 on 18th) and Colnbrook (300 on 22nd). On 20th, two Red-breasted Merganser were at the Wetland Centre. Also on 20th, there was a high count of 353 Greylag Geese at Rainham Marshes. A Spoonbill was at Rainham on 22nd. Records of eight Bewick's Swans were received from Q. Mother Res on 24th.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

All contributors of ornithological records to the Society in 2009 are listed below. We apologise if any names have been omitted inadvertently.

Following the response to our new system of abbreviations for contributors, we have reverted to a previous style. So, for example, CDR Heard has returned to CDRH, and D Morrison has become DMn. We hope you prefer this system.

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Abbott S | | Banks C | | Birkett C | | Brown A | |
| Abrahams D | | Barfoot A | | Birkett J | | Brown E | |
| Agar N | | Barham P | | Bishop B | BB | Brown M | |
| Aguado M | | Barker DJ | | Bishop W | | Brown P | |
| Aldred J | | Barlow G | | Blake A | | Brown S | |
| Alexander Park | | Barn Elms Natural | | Blake J | | Browne A | |
| Ornithological Grp | | History Group | | Blake S | SBk | Browne N | |
| Alfrey P | | Barnes D | | Blatcher P | | Browne R | |
| Allan JP | JPA | Barnes G | | Blow J | | Bruce-White N | |
| Allen A | | Barnes R | RBs | Blow M | | BTO Heronries | |
| Allen C | | Barnett D | | Bloys R | | Survey | |
| Allen E | | Barrett D | | Blundell L | | BTO WeBS Unit | |
| Allen P | | Barrett P | | Blyth D | | Buckel V | |
| Ames S | | Barry C | | Blythe T | | Buckingham S | |
| Anderson D | | Batcheler D | | Bodini L | LB | Bucks Bird Club | |
| Anderson H | | Batten LA | | Bodman L | | Burden M | |
| Anderson J | | Baumat P | | Bond D | | Burgess C | |
| Anderson K | | Baxter P | | Boness C | | Burgess R | |
| Anderson N | | Baylis P | PB | Bonser P | | Burgum N | |
| Anderson T | | Beach C | | Bonser R | | Burrus I | |
| Andrew R | | Beale J | | Bonser RH | RHB | Butler J | |
| Andrews D | | Beasley AJ | AJB | Booth D | DBo | Butler M | |
| Andrews M | | Beatley M | | Borrow N | | Butler T | |
| Annetts J | | Beatty M | | Borwick R | | Butlin R | |
| Anthony J | | Beaumont R | | Bournat M | | Buxton R | |
| Apps SJ | | Beddard R | RB | Boyce P | | Byrne C | |
| Archer JK | JKA | Beken D | | Boyes G | | Cage C | |
| Arnfield RJ | | Bell A | AAB | Braddock R | | Caine G | |
| Artiss H | | Bell R | | Bradley SM | | Caine T | |
| Astley J | JA | Belman P | | Bradnum D | DBn | Callahan D | DCn |
| Avison D | | Bemyon M | | Bradshaw H | | Callf RM | |
| Avison G | | Bennell I | | Bradshaw I | | Campbell D | |
| Ayad B | | Bennett B | | Braggs JA | | Cannings F | |
| Ayers R | | Bennett G | | Bray J | | Carpenter C | |
| Bacon F | | Berks Bird Club | | Bridges B | BBr | Carter A | |
| Bacon S | SBn | Bessant C | | Bridges M | | Carter D | |
| Bailey J | | Bessant N | | Briggs P | | Carter N | |
| Baily A | | Bexley J R | | Briggs S | | Carter S | |
| Baker H | | Biggs N | | Bright A | | Casselton PJ | |
| Ball P | | Bird P | | Bright J | JB | Cassidy L | |
| Balmer DE | | Birdguides | BG | Bright-Thomas P | | Cendron N | |

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|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Chaffe M | Cox A | Duncan KP | Fowler A |
| Chalmers S | Craig M | Eagles R | Fox S |
| Chambers K | Crathorne L&B | East London Birders | France M |
| Chambers N | Cripps M | Forum | Franklin J |
| Chaney D | Cripps R | ELBF | Frearson S |
| Chapman J | Cripps RJ | Edwards D | Fremantle C |
| Chapman JW | Croft N | Edwards E | Friends of Beckenham |
| Chapman P | Cropper PM | Edwards J | Place Park |
| Charleson E | Crossness NR | Edwards S | Friends of West Ham |
| Chasteauneuf P | sightings book | Ellam C | Park |
| Chastell S | Crowd J | Ellis I | Frosdick M |
| Child D | Crump J | Ellis IS | Fuller D |
| Chilton S | Culshaw A | Ellisdon D | Fure A |
| Churches B | Culshaw AJ | Ellwood M | Gale J |
| Churn R | Cummings S | Elmes JP | Gale SW |
| Clancy A | Curran I | Elmes J-P | Garcia E |
| Clancy T | Curry A | Emblem-English C | Gardener A |
| Clark D | Curtis D | English P | Gardiner A |
| Clark FC | Curtis JD | Erickson-Hull D | Gardiner Brown J |
| Clark JM | Dagley J | DE-H | Gardner N |
| Clark K | Dale C | Evans LGR | Gardner R |
| Clark T | Darbyshire S | LGRE | Gatehouse P |
| Clarke A | Darrell-Lambert | Evans R | Gates J |
| Clarke J | D | Evans S | JG |
| Clarke K | DGDL | Everett CM | Gatley SJ |
| Clarke M | Davies G | CME | Gazzard L |
| Clayton B | Davies M | Ewart M | Gent C |
| Clayton M | Davies P | Fair G | CG |
| Clements R | Davies P (Snr) | Farrier M | Gent S |
| Clerici S | Davies RCV | Fawcett A | George S |
| Clews BD | Davis W | Fearnside J | Gibbs A |
| Cliffe P | Dawton B | Feltham A | Gibson A |
| Coath D | Dean D | Fennel C | Gibson S |
| Coath M | Dean J | Fentiman C | Gill E |
| Coe D | Dee C | Ferguson DM | Gill G |
| Coffey B | Dee M | Ferris P | Gilry A |
| Coleman D | Delaloye P | Field A | Girvan DA |
| Coleman J | Delve J | Finlay D | Given Q |
| Coleman R | Dennis R | Fisher K | Goad AR |
| Collett P | Dent M | Fisher S | Goddard AP |
| Collins M | DeSilva D | Fitzgerald BM | Goddard G |
| Colmans J | Dingemans J | Fleck J | Golin M |
| Cook C | Dip or Glory website | Fleiss A | Gompertz D |
| Cook D | Dixon K | Fleming K | Goodall G |
| Cook E | D'mello H | Flesher R | Goodman P |
| Cook P | Dobson J | Fletcher D | Gordon P |
| Cook R | Donetti A | Flight S | PGo |
| Cooper A | Donovan B | Flinn G | Goss N |
| Cornish H | Dorman A | Fogg S | Gough SJ |
| Cottingham FJ | Driscoll M | Folkerd G | Grantham M |
| Cousins R | Drummond L | Ford A | Gravatt JC |
| Cowie S | Dryden R | Ford N & E | Gray A |
| | Duckett AR | Forder D | Gray B |
| | ARD | Fordham J | Gray P |
| | | Forsyth T | Green N |

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|-------------------|------|-------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|
| Green P | | Herbert RJ | | Ingold R | | Lamsdell C | CL |
| Green R | | Heron K | | Innes A | | Langley RR | |
| Greenaway K | | Hersham Ringing | | Innes RE | REI | Langsdon P | |
| Gregory M | MG | Group | HRG | Ionosphere C | | Lapworth G | |
| Gregory SM | SG | Herts & Middlesex | | Ivey C | | Last B | BLa |
| Griffith S | | Wildlife Trust | | Jackson A | | Last W | |
| Gross R D | | Hewlett A | | Jackson B | | Lawford M | ML |
| Grounds M | | Hickmit SA | | Jackson P | | Lawson A | AL |
| Guest K | KGu | Hicks RK | | Jackson R | | Leach B | BL |
| Guiver J | | Hider N | | James C | | Leahy E | |
| Gundersen J | | Hill J | | James G | | Leaver N | |
| Gurr P | | Hill T | THI | James GA | | Lee A | |
| Guthrie G | | Hilfield Park Reservoir | | Jamie G | | Lee D | |
| Haar R | | Bird Report | | Jarvis K | KJ | Lee H | |
| Hagglund P | | Hills B | | Jeffreys D | | Leeke S | |
| Hagglund Paynes A | | Hills CAR | | Jenkins Shaw J | JJS | Leighton R | |
| Haines W | | Hoare JJ | | Jenner B | | Leppard T | |
| Hale P | | Hobson A | | Johns M | | Lethbridge J | JL |
| Halley-Frame V | VHF | Hoclor M | | Johnson S | | Lewis A | |
| Hammond S | | Hodges A | | Jones B | BJ | Lewis H | |
| Hanrahan K | | Hodgson J | | Jones CDR | | Lewis P | |
| Hanson D | | Holden A | | Jones N | | Liddell G | |
| Harbison Y | | Hollands B | | Jones P | | Lindo DJ | DJL |
| Hardie R | | Honey M | | Jones R | | Lindsay C | |
| Harding C | | Honey MH | | Jordan D | | Ling DJ | |
| Hares S | | Honey MR | MH | Jordan M | MJ | Lodge C | |
| Hargreaves R | | Hooper R | | Jupp C | | Londonbirders Wiki | |
| Harlow J | | Hopkins J | | Kaye R | RK | Longley J | |
| Harrington S | | Hopkins P | | Keen S | | Lowden P | |
| Harris A | | Hopkins R | | Kelsick A | | Lycett I | IL |
| Harris DM | DMH | Horgan J | | Kempster J | | Lyness D | |
| Harris GJ | | Hornby K | | Kendall I | IK | Mac M | MM |
| Harris M | | Horrocks R | | Kennelly T | | MacDonald J | |
| Harris MA | | Housley D | | Kent Ornithological | | Mackenzie Davies C | |
| Harris N | | Houston T | Tho | Society website | | Mackie H | |
| Harris T | | Howarth I | | Kershaw L | | Maddison G | |
| Harrison B | | Howdon D | DH | Kershaw S | | Mair P | |
| Harrison L | | Huggins S | SHn | Kettle A | | Makengo J | |
| Harrison R | | Hughes M | | Khan N | | Malby T | |
| Hart P | Pht | Hull C | | Kidd J | | Mansfield F | |
| Harvey S | | Hull M | | Kilby B | | Mantle P | |
| Hatton W | | Hulls A | | Kilner C | | Mantle PLJ | |
| Hawgood G | | Hulls T | | King J | | Marett A | |
| Hawkins J | | Hunt G | | Kings M | | Maroevic FJ | FJM |
| Hawkins KJ | | Hunt M | | Kitchen S | | Marriott M | |
| Hawkins P | PH | Hurst F | | Kite P | | Marshall SK | |
| Haworth J | | Husband RA | | Knight G | | Martin R | |
| Hay G | GWJH | Hutchins F | | Knott S | | Martyr R | |
| Haynes A | AHs | Hutley D | | Knox P | | Massey A | |
| Heard CDR | CDRH | Huttner I | | Laban K | | Massey L | LM |
| Heaton R | | Hyland P | | Lacey H | Hly | Mathieu N | |
| Hepburn D | | Ilett M | | Lambert P | PLt | Matthews L | |

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----|--------------|-----|-----------------|-----|--------------------|------|
| May N | | Murray AJ | | Payne D | | Reynolds A | AR |
| McBride A | | Murray J | JMy | Payne M | | Richards G | GR |
| McCallum L | | Murray K | KMy | Payne R | | Richardson M | |
| McCarthy D | | Murray S | | Peak D | | Riches G | |
| McCarthy MG | | Murrell P | | Pearce S | | Riddler M | |
| McGough D | DMG | Nagle M | | Pearson A | | Ridge J | |
| McKee M | MMe | Nash C | | Pearson M | | Rigby P | |
| McKenzie DT | DTM | Nash J | JN | Pearson MJ | MJP | Righelato R | |
| Mckenzie-Lloyd | | Nasir J | | Pearson R | | Rimmell M | |
| PAF | | Naylor P | PN | Pearl R | | Rixon J | |
| McManus KJ | | Ndunge T | | Peck R | | Robinson CC | CCR |
| McManus M | | Netherwood M | MN | Peggs G | | Robinson J | |
| Meier J | | Netley HR | | Peggs S | | Robinson M | |
| Merchant P | Pmt | Neville L | | Pelitry M | | Roper P | PRr |
| Merchant V | | Newbound P | | Pell J | | Rose I | |
| Merritt A | | Newbound PJ | | Petch EA | | Rose JE | |
| Messenbird G | | Newham J | | Petchey M | | Rose M | |
| Messenger C | | Newmark P | | Petts S | | Ross P | |
| Metcalf O | | Newson J | | Phillips A | | Rosser M | |
| Millar A | | Nichols AJ | | Phillips N | | Rosser M | |
| Millar J | | Nield J | | Phillips P | | Routledge M | |
| Millar K | KM | Norcott B | | Pilbeam M | | Roxbrough-Smith S | |
| Millar N | | Northam R | | Pinnock A | | Roy K | |
| Miller B | | Nuttall R | | Platt A | | Royal Parks | |
| Miller I | IM | Oakland M | | Pledge D | | Wildlife Group | |
| Millington D | | Ogden P | | Plummeridge P | | Royston P | PRo |
| Mills S | | O'Grady P | | Pole M | | RSPB Rainham | RSPB |
| Mitchell D | DML | Oliver C | | Pope N | NP | Ruislip & District | |
| MKA Ecology | | Oliver N | | Pottinger I | | NHS | |
| Monk D | | Oliver PJ | PJO | Poynter S | | Rumsey D | |
| Montier DJ | | Oliver W | | Prater F | FP | Rush K | |
| Moon AV | AVM | O'Neill M | | Prater G | | Rush M | |
| Moore C | | Orchard M | | Pressland D | | Rye Meads | |
| Moore KE | KEM | Osborn T | | Prested C | | Partnership | |
| Moores R | | Osmond J | | Preston N | | Salisbury P | |
| Morgan R | | Page-Jones R | | Preston P | PPn | Salmon A | |
| Morgan S | | Paice M | | Priaulx M | | Sanderson G | |
| Morris D | | Painter J | JP | Price A | AP | Sawyer J | JS |
| Morris DJ | DJM | Painter S | | Priestnall S | | Schickner M | |
| Morrison D | DMn | Palmer J | | Purdey KL | KLP | Seale J | |
| Morrison DR | DRM | Palmer JM | | Pursall K | | Seekins R | |
| Morton E | | Palmer M | | Pyrah R | | Self ASM | ASMS |
| Morton R | | Papps S | | Quinn A | | Sellers P | PSs |
| Morton T | | Parish J | | Rare Bird Alert | RBA | Senior NP | NPS |
| Moss J | | Parish N | | Raven G | | Sharman E | |
| Moss P | | Parker T | | Rayment K | KR | Shaw I | IS |
| Motch J | | Parnaby D | | Raymond D | | Shearman A | |
| Mottram K | | Parr M | | Rear D | | Shepherd M | MSd |
| Moule J | | Partidge J | | Redfern M | MR | Shepherd W | |
| Muller J | | Pash S | | Reed B | BR | Sherin B | |
| Mummery V | | Pashby C | | Reid A | ARd | Sherlock B | |
| Murphy N | | Pashby D | | Reid J | | Sherlock C | |

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----|---------------------|------------------|---------------|-----|
| Sherlock CA | | Stewart G | Tusa S | Wheatley J | |
| Sherriff R | RS | Stewart I | Tutt D | Whiskin B | |
| Shippey S | SSy | Stewart KC | Tweed A | White GJ | GW |
| Shonleben S | | Stiegler A | Twyford N | White M | |
| Simmonds Y | | Stinton CS | Unwin P | White PD | |
| Simms D | | Stocks N | Utton BM | White T | |
| Simpson F | | Strangeman PJ | van Steenis JH | Whitehouse D | |
| Sims M | | Street P | PSt | Vanner K | |
| Sinden N | | Stride A | Vaughan A | Whittle H | |
| Slade C | | Stroud A | AST | Vaughan H | HV |
| Smart C | | Studd G | Vaughan L | Whittle M | |
| Smith A | | Sullivan M | Vaughan P | Widdowson D | |
| Smith B | | Summers C | Veer NVD | Widgery JP | |
| Smith D | DSm | Surbiton & District | Velasco M | Wigg M | |
| Smith E | | Birdwatching Soc | Venables HJ | Wightman S | |
| Smith J | JSm | Surtees S | Verrall AG | Wilczur JPP | |
| Smith K | | Sutton K | AGV | Wilkie B | |
| Smith KW | | Sutton P | Vousden C | Wilkinson C | |
| Smith L | | Tanner A | Waddell A | Willets D | |
| Smith M | | Tanner N | Wainwright P | Willett JD | |
| Smith MJ | | Taylor M | Wakerling V | Williams O | |
| Smith N | | Taylor MJ | Walford M | Williams R | |
| Smith P | | Taylor N | Walker P | Willis D | |
| Smith S | | Taylor R | Walker V | Wills C | CW |
| Smith T | | Terry J | Waller A | Wills D | |
| Smith TA | | Terry JH | Waller M | Wilson B | |
| Smith W | | Thomas A | Walliker A | Wilson G | |
| Smout C | | Thompson J | ATH | Wallington JR | |
| Smout PAC | | Thompson J-P | Walter D | Wilson M | |
| Snell E | | Thompson S | Ward P | Wilson S | |
| Snow J | | Thomson J | Wardell A | Wiltshire I | |
| Southwood J | | Thornley P | Warden M | Winn AC | |
| Spencer P | PS | Thrush P | Warden R | Winston R | |
| Spicer M | MJS | Tilbrook J | JT | Warne P | |
| Spink F | | Tillbrook J | Warner P | Warren P | |
| Spinks G | | Tilley SC | Warren D | Warren K | |
| Spooner J | | Timms N | Wasse J | Wardman HJ | |
| Spooner SJ | SJS | Todd M | Waterman HJ | Waters D | |
| Stacey WA | | Todd R | Watters D | Wathall JC | |
| Stafford T | | Tollemache B | Watson J | Wattall JC | |
| Stallard B | | Treganza P | Watts RJ | RJW | |
| Stallard P | | Treganza G | Webb M | Wright BE | BEW |
| Stanger A | | Treganza P | Webb R | Wright J | |
| Stanley D | | Trevis B | Wee E | Wright T | |
| Stannard E | | Trim C | Weeldon P | Wurr M | |
| Stansfield RH | | Try F | Welsh Harp | Wyse J | |
| Stead R | | Tucker R | Conservation Grp | Young F | |
| Stevens J | | Turner C | West S | Young G | |
| Stevens P | | Turner E | Wheatcroft D | Young T | |
| Stewart A | | Turner J | | Younger S | |

BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA, 2009

WITH SOME ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS

A Report on Bird-life within Twenty Miles of St Paul's Cathedral.

The sequence and nomenclature of species in the systematic list of this report is based on the *Birds of Britain: the Complete Checklist*, 3rd Edition (Mitchell and Vinicombe, 2010). A Checklist of Birds of the London Area appears on pages 231 to 239.

The six counties within the London Area are signified in the report as follows: Essex, Herts = Hertfordshire, Middx = Middlesex, Bucks = Buckinghamshire, Kent, and Surrey, with Inner London (= In Lond) signifying the central rectangular area shown on the map on page 9. Other abbreviations are:

| | | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| BBS | = Breeding Birds Survey | o/h | = overhead |
| CP | = Country Park | OS | = Open Space |
| FB | = Filter Beds | OS | = Open Space |
| GC | = Golf Course | PS | = Power Station |
| GP | = Gravel Pit(s) | QE II | = Queen Elizabeth II |
| KGV | = King George V | Q. Mary | = Queen Mary |
| KGVI | = King George VI | Q. Mother | = Queen Mother |
| LBR | = London Bird Report | R. | = River |
| LNR | = Local Nature Reserve | Res | = Reservoir(s) |
| m, f/fem | = male, female | RG | = Ringing Group |
| imm, juv | = immature, juvenile | SF/W | = Sewage Farm/Works |
| NR | = Nature Reserve | SP | = Sand Pit(s) |
| N, S, E, W | = North, South, East and West | WR | = Wildfowl Reserve |

Observer abbreviations are shown only against records for species which are rare in the London Area. A list of all the observers who have contributed records for 2009 appears on pages 24-28. The abbreviation 'mo' used for some records, indicates 'many observers'. All running totals of rare or unusual birds that are provided in the systematic list refer to occurrences since 1900.

This edition of the *LBR* places greater emphasis on records within the London boroughs, and lower counts are sometimes included for these areas, reflecting the smaller populations of many species within the built-up area of London.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Status: Common breeding resident.

A total of 110 breeding pairs was reported, an increase from 89 last year and the highest since 138 in 2005. This familiar species, which nests in the least promising of urban environments, is under-recorded so the figure should be treated with caution. Nests were again found in many urban parks including Battersea Park and Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens in Inner London.

Mute Swan, breeding records (incl. nest-building)

| Essex | Herts | Middx | Bucks | Kent | Surrey | In Lond |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|---------|
| 20 | 3 | 19 | 1 | 10 | 20 | 3 |

Counts of 50 or more birds came from 14 sites (eight last year) and there was also an increase in counts of more than 100 birds to eight (one last year). A selection of the highest counts is given below:

Essex: Harrow Lodge Park, 175 on Jan 5th, 182 on Feb 6th and 132 on May 6th.

Walthamstow Res, 59 on July 10th.

Herts: Batchworth Lake, 75 on Mar 15th. Bury Lake, 87 on Feb 4th. Seventy Acres Lake, 57 on Feb 15th. Stocker's Lake, 65 on Nov 23rd.

Middx: Brent Res, 66 on Oct 24th (site record). Home Park, 55 on Apr 9th. KGVI Res, 53 on July 30th. Wraysbury Res, 53 on Aug 10th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 140 on Oct 31st.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, 20 on June 14th.

Surrey: Queen's Promenade, R. Thames, 76 on Sep 30th. Walton Res, 60 on June 14th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 70 on Dec 1st.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Status: scarce migrant, usually in autumn, and winter visitor.

Three records of 12 birds (four of c11 last year), about average for recent years. There were much higher numbers in 2005, when a substantial influx into southern England in the second winter period produced an exceptional seven records of 57 birds. Generally fewer Bewick's Swans are now seen in London; for example, from 1990-99, 403 birds were recorded; from 2000-09, 154 were recorded.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Dec 14th (DBo, BR).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, eight on Dec 24th (five ads, three juvs) then flew W. (CDRH).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, three on Dec 19th (MH).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Status: rare winter visitor.

Two records of five birds followed two blank years for the rarest swan in the London Area. Five records of 16 in 2005 is the highest figure so far this decade.

Essex: Walthamstow Res, an adult from Oct 13th-29th (LB *et al*).

Middx: Tottenham Marshes, an adult from 30th-31st Oct, presumed same as Walthamstow Res above (PLT).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus***Status:** scarce winter visitor.

An excellent year for this hard-to-find species, with three records of 12 birds. Since 1990, there have been just six records of 63 birds, despite the large numbers wintering in Norfolk. Identifying grey geese to species in flight can be a challenge however, and some pinkfeet may have been missed.

Essex: Chafford Hundred, nine flew north on Sep 16th (DGDL). Rainham Marshes, one on Oct 10th (MD).

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons***Status:** scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A poor year, with just three sightings from Essex and one from Kent, clearly involving some duplication. The previous three years produced much higher totals: six records of 92 birds in 2008, nine of 94 in 2007, and an impressive 18 of 221 in 2006. Birds regarded as escapes, or probable escapes, are listed in Appendix I.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley, three from Feb 26th to Apr 1st (DMn *et al*). Rainham Marshes, three on Mar 29th (RSPB), one on Apr 13th (HV).

Kent: Crossness, three flew NW on Mar 29th (JKA).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser***Status:** common breeding resident, controlled.

A minimum of 58 pairs of this under-recorded species were reported this year (52 last year) and counts of more than 50 came from 23 sites (19 last year). The impressive total of 402 from Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, where the species is increasing despite being controlled by egg-pricking, is the highest ever. Before the 1980s, Greylag Geese were infrequent there. A colour-ringed bird (DP3) seen at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens in January was ringed at Sevenoaks WR in 1998. One seen there in February, with a blue ring (IBY), had been ringed in Hyde Park in 1997.

All breeding records are given below (no. of pairs/broods if known in brackets) followed by some of the highest counts in each sector.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (bred, 25 juvs). 249 on Sep 18th. Fairlop Waters (1). Ingrebourne Valley (1); 116 on Dec 22nd. Mayesbrook Park, 125 on June 23rd. Rainham Marshes, 353 on Dec 20th. Walthamstow Res (29 broods, 24 in 2008), 83 on July 13th. Warren Gorge (1), 64 on July 1st.

Herts: Amwell NR (3). Frogmore GP (1). Lynsters Farm (1). Lynsters Lake (1). Maple Cross, 80 on Sep 16th. Maple Lodge NR (1). Otterspool (1). Stocker's Lake, 90 on Sep 25th. Woodoaks Farm, 100 on Oct 5th.

Middx: Finsbury Park (2). Springfield Park, 88 on Nov 9th.

Bucks: Horton GP (4). Wraysbury GP, 62 on March 10th.

Kent: R. Darent (Otford Rd), 130 on Jan 10th. Sevenoaks WR (bred, max 44 goslings), 247 on July 4th, 240 on Sep 26th, 315 on Oct 7th. Sundridge (1).

Surrey: Gatton Lake (1), 70 on Jan 18th. Holmethorpe SP (2), 100 Jan 7th, 105 Aug 29th, rising to max of 153 on Dec 27th. London Wetland Centre, 86 on Feb 16th. Trevereux, 87 on Jan 24th.



An adult Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* was an unexpected find at Walthamstow Reservoirs on 19 October. The species is a rare winter visitor and is not recorded annually in London. (David Darrell-Lambert)

In Lond: Battersea Park (3). Buckingham Palace Gdns (2). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (bred), 402 on Jan 10th, 315 on Oct 7th, 274 on Nov 11th. St James's Park (2), 158 on June 1st.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Status: occasional migrant and winter visitor.

A fairly typical year for this species with Rainham Marshes again leading the way with sightings on 11 dates. There were reports from 11 sites (14 last year) but no count exceeded five birds. Last year there were four counts over five, the highest being a flock of 29.

Essex: KGV Res, one on Feb 17th. Rainham Marshes, singles Mar 4th & 5th; five on Oct 10th, four on Oct 14th and singles on Oct 17th and Nov 1st, 2nd, 9th, 10th, 16th & 22nd. Walthamstow Res, one on April 12th.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, one on Jan 18th.

Middx: Q. Mary Res, two on Oct 27th. Wormwood Scrubs, five on Nov 8th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, singles on Feb 23rd, Mar 1st to 7th and Oct 15th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, three on Oct 14th. Crossness, one on Oct 17th.

Surrey: QE II Res, singles on Mar 16th and Nov 30th.

In Lond: Whitehall, one flew west on Jan 15th (DDS).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Status: very common, introduced breeding resident, controlled.

Like Mute Swan and Greylag Goose, the number of breeding records received give an incomplete picture for this widespread species. The population is believed to have stabilised since control measures were introduced in the 1980s, though the 57 broods at

Walthamstow Res this year was an increase from 43 in 2008. The biggest count there, of birds gathering to moult, was 530 in July (259 in 2008) the highest since 916 in 2006. One of the Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens birds with a blue and white ring (AFS) had been ringed in June 1994 at Barn Elms Res, now the London Wetland Centre. Breeding records for sites with three or more pairs, or where large numbers of juveniles were seen, are given below (no. of pairs/broods in brackets) followed by a selection of the highest counts in each sector. All breeding records are given for Inner London.

Essex: Belhus Wood CP (22 juvs). Fishers Green Goosefield, 300 on Sep 16th. Harrow Lodge Park, 265 on Jan 12th. Walthamstow Res (57 broods, 43 in 2008), 530 on July 3rd. Wanstead Flats, 324 on Sep 8th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 218 on July 9th. Batchworth Lake (3). Rye Meads RSPB (5), 260 on Aug 30th. Stocker's Lake (7). Verulamium Park (4).

Middx: Alexandra Park (6). Brent Res, 241 on July 12. Pymmes Park (5). Littleton, 183 on Jan 17th. Staines Res, 268 on Aug 31st.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, 123 on June 24th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (6), 208 on Jan 11th. Clapham Common (5). Gatton Lake (3). Holmethorpe SP, 118 Jan 11th, then 150 from Aug 20th with max of 260 on Sep 5th. London Wetland Centre, 371 on Aug 16th. R. Wandle, Butter Hill-Morden Park (5). Walton Res (8, 9 in 2008), 135 on Jan 12th. Wandsworth Common (3).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (breeding attempt, but nest destroyed). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (bred), 160 on Feb 3rd. Lambeth, 32 over Lambeth Road on June 5th. St James's Park (bred). Joint Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns/St James's Park count of 168 in December.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Status: increasing, introduced breeding resident.

There were further signs of expansion this year with birds reported from 109 sites (91 last year, an increase of ten from 2007) but the number of confirmed breeding pairs was 15, the same as 2008. The species bred for the first time at St James's Park, raising three young, and three young were also fledged at Hampstead Heath in the first breeding record there. The highest count was 57 at Regent's Park on Nov 3rd. All breeding records are given (no. of pairs/broods in brackets) followed by a selection of the highest counts.

Essex: Recorded at 12 sites. Fishers Green Goosefield, 22 on Dec 15th. Holyfield Lake, ten on Nov 7th. Holyfield Hall Farm, 13 on Feb 8th.

Herts: Recorded at 30 sites. Lynsters Farm, 11 on Nov 5th. Stocker's Lake, 16 on Oct 27th.

Middx: Recorded at 21 sites. Bushy Park (1), four young; seven on Feb 11th. Hampstead Heath (1) three young fledged. Home Park (2) two young; ten on Feb 11th. Q. Mary Res, 20 on Aug 22nd. Staines Moor, 11 on Nov 29th. Staines Res, ten on July 5th.

Bucks: Recorded at six sites. Q. Mother Res, 44 in to roost on Aug 10th. Horton GP, eight on May 18th and Jan 4th.

Kent: Recorded at four sites. Chipstead Lake, six on Nov 3rd. Crossness, six on June 27th. Sevenoaks WR (1) six-seven goslings; 12 on June 28th, July 1st & 12th and Aug 8th.

Surrey: Recorded at 29 sites. Clapham Common (1) five goslings, 24 on July 31st and Sep 6th. Hurst Park, 11 on Sep 22nd. London Wetland Centre, 17 on Nov 25th. QE II Res,

18 on Oct 11th. Richmond Park (1) two broods. Thorpe Park, eight on Feb 15th. Tooting Common (1) young all predated; eight on Nov 5th. Wandsworth Common (1) two young raised; 11 on Sep 13th. West End Common (1).

In Lond: Recorded at seven sites. Battersea Rise Cemetery (1) three young fledged. Buckingham Palace Gdns, two on May 1st. Burgess Park, four on Sep 25th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2) broods of seven and four, not all survived; 15 on Apr 29th. Paddington Green, two on Apr 14th, Nov 20th and Nov 21st. Regent's Park, 57 on Nov 3rd. St James's Park (1) two broods, first predated, second raised three young, six on July 10th.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Status: decreasing breeding resident on lower Thames, regular visitor to major waters where it breeds in small numbers.

There was a small increase in the number of breeding pairs (or broods, where the number of pairs is unclear) to 16 (13 in 2007) and a bigger rise in the number of non-breeding pairs seen in the breeding season to at least 23 (nine last year).

The highest number of broods at one site was five at Crossness; seven pairs summered at Rye Meads but there was no evidence of breeding. All breeding records (no. of pairs or broods in brackets) and a selection of the highest counts are listed below.

Essex: Barking Bay, 36 on Dec 8th. Rainham Marshes (1), brood of nine (3-4 broods last year); 123 on Mar 15th. Creekmouth, Barking 169 on Jan 11th. Walthamstow Res (2), 17 young; 30 on Apr 22nd. West Thurrock Marshes, 51 on Jan 18th.

Herts: Rye Meads RSPB, seven pairs summered.

Middx: Hampton FB (1); 12 on June 19th. Q. Mary Res (2), at least four young fledged. Staines Res (2), eight young fledged; 15 on June 29th.

Bucks: Horton GP, three summering pairs, 14 on May 6th. Q. Mother Res (1) one young; three pairs regular in April.

Kent: Crossness (5 broods); 12 counts over 100 and five over 200, peaking at 304 on June 28th. Swanscombe Marshes, 41 on Mar 30th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (1). QE II Res, 16 on May 1st. Walton Res (1), nine young; 22 on Apr 13th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, two on May 10th.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Status: introduced breeding resident, established and locally common.

The number of broods of this attractive woodland duck again increased slightly, this time to between 41 and 48. Wintering numbers were not high except at Grovelands Park where they reached 158 on Nov 19th - indeed the observer thought it possible that as many as 200 might have been present although obstructed views prevented confirmation of this. This figure would beat the previous high at this site established in 2005. All breeding records, which are shown in brackets, and significant counts are included.

Essex: Connaught Water, 30 on Jan 24th. Cummings Farm Res, 22 on Dec 6th. Epping Forest 21 pairs bred - an increase on 2008. Hainault Forest, Apr 17th (1 pair). Highams Park Lake (2). Strawberry Hill Pond, 38 on Oct 11th. Weald Brook (1). Widdington Farm, Noak Hill (1).



Mandarin Duck. (Jan Wilczur)

Herts: Aldenham Res, 24 on Nov 11th. Beech Farm GP, 11 on Oct 11th. Hatfield, 11 on July 19th. Hatfield Park (1). Northaw (1). Nyn Pond, Northaw, 32 on Oct 31st. Panshanger Park, 19 on Jan 18th. Tykeswater Lake, Elstree (3). Woodside (1).
Middx: Forty Hall, Enfield (2). Grovelands Park (2), with 158 on Nov 19th, 131 on Nov 22nd and 94 on Nov 29th. Trent Park (2), with 20 on Feb 21st. Whitewebbs Wood, 25 on Dec 28th.

Bucks: Black Park, 20 on Dec 28th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, 32 on Nov 22nd.

Surrey: Epsom Common, Stew Ponds (2). Richmond Park (7). The Ledges, Esher, 22 on June 9th. Wimbledon Common (1).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, a female with brood of six on June 9th. Regent's Park, 40 on Jan 7th and 28 on Dec 4th. St James's Park, five on Nov 22nd.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Status: common winter visitor with occasional summer records.

There were no significant changes in the population in 2009. Numbers at Rainham, the key London site, were slightly up (with a four-figure total recorded in February) while numbers at the London Wetland Centre were slightly down. A small number of birds summered, although there was no suggestion of breeding. Monthly peaks from sites recording at least one count of 100+ birds are tabled below; other significant counts are added in the notes.

| Eurasian Wigeon | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jul | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | Belhus Woods CP | 132 | 109 | 11 | - | 2 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 24 | 63 |
| | Rainham Marshes NR | 748 | 1,002 | 563 | 230 | 3 | 1 | 75 | 80 | 400 | 700 |
| Herts | Aldenham Res | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 2 | 111 | - |
| | Bowyers Water | 120 | - | 10 | - | - | - | 22 | 115 | 152 | 200 |
| | Friday Lake | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 100 | - | 1 | 26 |
| | Hilfield Park Res | 135 | 75 | 20 | - | - | - | 57 | 83 | 94 | 121 |
| | Radlett Aero GP | 60 | 22 | 49 | - | - | - | - | - | 8 | 121 |
| Middx | KGVI Res | 9 | 3 | 18 | - | - | - | 207 | 219 | 200 | 5 |
| | Q. Mary Res | 213 | 253 | - | 2 | - | - | 6 | 1 | 2 | 192 |
| | Staines Res | 160 | 291 | 126 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 78 | 96 | 251 |
| Bucks | Wraysbury | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 180 | 467 | 111 | 52 |

Essex: Netherhall GP, 77 on Mar 14th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 67 on Nov 11th. Stocker's Farm, 55 on Mar 9th and 52 on Mar 11th.

Middx: Kempton NR, 67 on Dec 12th.

Bucks: Woodlands Park Lake, 90 on Feb 8th.

Kent: Crossness LNR, 20 on Feb 11th was the highest of the year.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, 67 on Mar 11th was the highest (although other winter counts fell not much below this). Thorpe Park, 80 on Feb 15th. Walton Res, 87 on Jan 7th, 93 on Feb 9th and 77 on Mar 16th.

In Lond: Fulham FC, six W on Sep 14th. Hyde Park/ Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 10th and Nov 10th then three on Nov 11th. Paddington Green, eight on Nov 15th. Regent's Park, a pair on Oct 14th.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Status: local breeding resident and common winter visitor.

The figures this year suggest an increase in the wintering population: in 2008 only two sites recorded totals of over 200 but at least five did in 2009, three of those sites recording on occasion totals of over 300. The breeding position was virtually unchanged, with 45 broods reported and several other sites recording probable breeding. Rye Meads, with 20 broods, remains the key site. Records of confirmed or probable breeding are given below with numbers shown in brackets. Monthly peaks for sites recording over 150 birds are tabled below.

| Gadwall | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---------|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | Rainham Marshes NR | 181 | 161 | 203 | 30 | 10 | 14 | 2 | 70 | 48 | 26 | 79 | 145 |
| Herts | Amwell NR | 168 | 77 | 18 | 32 | 10 | 25 | 6 | 18 | 32 | 74 | 162 | 125 |
| | Hilfield Park Res | 167 | 100 | 17 | 19 | 12 | 13 | 20 | 25 | 23 | 94 | 62 | 130 |
| | Rye Meads RSPB | 85 | 222 | 164 | 239 | 126 | 70 | 10 | 300 | 294 | 207 | 140 | 111 |
| Middx | Brent Res | 47 | 40 | 27 | 21 | 25 | 81 | 28 | 92 | 165 | 259 | 222 | 329 |
| Bucks | Wraysbury GP | 32 | 24 | 8 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 258 | 238 | 239 |
| Kent | Crossness LNR | 161 | 85 | 85 | 63 | 14 | 16 | 7 | 25 | 5 | 9 | 50 | 350 |
| Surrey | Wetland Centre | 69 | 74 | 52 | 56 | 17 | 70 | 21 | 136 | 166 | 163 | 78 | 77 |

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley (1). Rainham Marshes NR (2).

Herts: Aldenham Res, two pairs probably bred. Amwell NR (2). Bowyers Water, one pair probably bred. Hampermill Lake (1). Hatfield Aerodrome (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). Maple Lodge (6). Otterspool, one pair probably bred. Rye Meads RSPB (20). Seventy Acres Lake (1).

Middx: Brent Res (1).

Bucks: Horton GP (1).

Kent: Crossness LNR (1).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre (2).

In Lond: Battersea Park (6+). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, highest monthly peak of 15 in Jan. Regent's Park, 19 on Jan 7th and Feb 27th. Rotherhithe, a drake on Dec 11th. St James's Park, nine on Sep 9th.

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

Status: common winter visitor and rare breeder.

Not much change would seem to be the message of the 2009 records for this small duck. The Thames remains the key area, with figures for the eastern end of the river showing a slight increase while numbers seem to have declined (or people weren't watching!) in the western stretches. Again, while small numbers summered there was no suggestion of breeding. Figures for the major sites are tabulated, with high figures for other sites and all Inner London records in the text.

Essex: 53 broods on 12 sites.

Herts: 47 broods on 20 sites.

Middx: 31 broods on 13 sites.

Bucks: Three broods on three sites.

Kent: 11 broods on four sites.

Surrey: 168 broods/territories on 17 sites.

In Lond: 12 broods on three sites.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers, very occasional summer visitor.

There was no real alteration in the status of this attractive duck during 2009. Only three sites held Pintails more or less throughout the year, and of these only Rainham held reasonable numbers; the overall position also remains complicated by the presence of feral birds. There were a number of summer records but no suggestion of breeding. Records from the three chief sites are tabulated below, with summaries of the other records set out in the text.

| Pintail - monthly max | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | Rainham Marshes NR | 26 | 24 | 14 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 5 | 10 | 14 | 23 |
| Herts | Amwell NR | 2 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 3 | - | 1 |
| Surrey | Wetland Centre | 8 | 8 | 4 | - | 3 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |

Essex: Connaught Water, one on Jan 26th. Fairlop Waters, one on Sep 14th. Hall Marsh, a pair on Jan 18th and Feb 28th with a single on Jan 30th & 31st. KGV Res, two on Oct 17th and Nov 6th. Mayesbrook Park, a single on Jan 23rd & 25th and Feb 6th.

Herts: Bowyers Water, one on Jan 14th. Hilfield Park Res, two on Oct 31st. Rye Meads RSPB, two on Oct 3rd. Seventy Acres Lake, singles on Jan 1st and Nov 29th. Stocker's Lake, a single on Feb 8th. Tyttenhanger GPs, a pair on Mar 13th.



Pintail. (Jan Wilczur)

Middx: Brent Res, a female on several dates between Sep 18th and Oct 31st plus a drake on Oct 20th. KGVI Res, a female on a number of dates between Oct 18th and Dec 20th plus four on Oct 31st. Staines Moor, 12 on Oct 11th. Staines Res, one on Dec 27th. Stanwell Moor, one on Nov 24th.

Bucks: Horton GP, a single on Nov 28th. Q. Mother Res, eight on Jan 3rd. Wraybury GP, a female on Oct 2nd & 10th and a drake on Dec 21st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Oct 10th. Holmethorpe SP, a female from Apr 14th-25th. QE II Res, two on Nov 30th. Richmond Park, one on Nov 17th. R. Thames, Wandsworth, five on Dec 28th. South Norwood CP, one on Oct 2nd. Walton Res, one on June 5th and one on Oct 2nd & 11th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, a drake on Jan 7th.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Status: scarce passage migrant, rare in winter; occasionally breeds.

Noted at 19 sites, records of this summer visitor were consistent with the usual pattern this year with all sightings between March and October. Of more interest was a possible breeding record at Kempton NR but, although nesting is believed to have occurred, foxes appear to have ensured that it was unsuccessful. The last definite breeding record in the LNHS recording area was at Rainham Marshes in 2001 although breeding probably occurred there again in 2002. All records are given, although summarised at the more popular sites.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, a pair on May 5th & 10th. Dagenham Chase, a drake on Apr 15th. Mayesbrook Park, a pair on Apr 20th. Rainham Marshes NR, in spring recorded between Apr 6th & 30th with four on Apr 6th. Then just one on Aug 15th. Walthamstow Res, a drake on Apr 14th, May 14th & 16th. Then, a juvenile on Sep 14th. Wanstead Park, a pair on Apr 23rd, then a female on Sep 6th.

Herts: Amwell NR, two on Sep 15th, one on 16th, then one on Oct 28th. Maple Lodge NR, a drake on Apr 12th. Rye Meads RSPB, no spring records but autumn passage started on Aug 9th, with five birds present. One or two present for rest of month with four on Aug 26th. Then ending with single on Oct 17th & 18th.

Middx: Brent Res, a pair on Mar 29th. Kempton NR, in spring two drakes and a female were present from Apr 2nd to June 19th. Breeding is believed to have been attempted but was not successful. From Aug 1st to Oct 4th two to three birds were regularly present, probably an adult and two juveniles. KGVI Res, a single on various dates between Oct 18th & 31st.

Bucks: Horton GP, two drakes on May 2nd.

Kent: Crossness LNR, sightings between Aug 13th and Sep 30th involving at least three birds.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, a drake on Apr 24th. Holmethorpe SP, drake on Apr 6th and first-winter male on Aug 4th. London Wetland Centre, a pair on Mar 16th & 19th, then a drake on May 6th & 7th; this was followed by three on May 25th. In autumn there were regular sightings between June 30th and Sep 12th, with a max of four on Sep 3rd. QE II Res, one on Sep 11th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, up to five Jan 5th to Mar 9th, one on Dec 19th. Regent's Park, a drake throughout the summer between Apr 27th and Aug 16th.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce breeder, with small numbers recorded in summer.

The wintering population is at much the same level as recent years (although note should be taken of the extraordinary figures for Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, particularly in February), a number of birds summered and there were a handful of breeding records. Monthly figures for the main sites are given in the table, and the text notes breeding records and other significant numbers, including all Inner London records.

| Shoveler | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|----------|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | KGV Res | - | - | 8 | 3 | - | - | 142 | 151 | - | - |
| | Rainham Marshes NR | 165 | 137 | 127 | 132 | - | 49 | 128 | 141 | 86 | 152 |
| | Roding, Creekmouth | 265 | 139 | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | - | 119 |
| Herts | Stocker's & Bury Lakes | 190 | 163 | 52 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 34 | 101 |
| Middx | Brent Res | 24 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 4 | 49 | 130 | 115 | 78 | 123 |
| | Staines Res | 234 | 314 | 24 | 10 | 2 | 104 | 89 | 147 | 72 | 52 |
| Bucks | Orlitts Lakes | 135 | 104 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - |
| Kent | Crossness LNR | 122 | 40 | 30 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 10 | 150 |
| Surrey | Wetland Centre | - | 6 | 13 | 84 | 111 | 94 | 111 | 168 | 93 | 94 |
| | Walton Res | 18 | 6 | 33 | 20 | 2 | 57 | 183 | 186 | 122 | 13 |
| In Lond | Hyde Park/Kens Gdns | 105 | 204 | 67 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 26 | 17 | 16 | 46 |

Essex: Rainham Marshes NR (3). Walthamstow Res, 114 in Oct.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, 94 on Oct 18th and 61 on Oct 11th. Maple Lodge NR (1) for second consecutive year. Rye Meads RSPB, 61 on Feb 7th, and 82 on Mar 11th. Slipe Lane GP, 57 on Dec 19th.

Middx: Kempton NR, 129 in Jan.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 67 on Feb 10th and 87 on Oct 22nd.

Kent: Stone, 87 on Jan 10th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 86 on Jan 1st and 12th. Holmethorpe SP, 47 on Nov 5th.

In Lond: Battersea Park, a pair on Sep 8th and 22 on Oct 16th. Southwark Park, three on Jan 11th, seven on Nov 14th and two on Dec 5th. St James's Park, 13 on Nov 22nd.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Status: rare autumn and winter visitor, but true status clouded by frequent escapes and feral breeding.

The true status of this species in London continues to confuse and will continue to do so as long as the two feral flocks in Bushy Park and Regent's Park are thriving. Records will be treated in the same way as last year and those from Inner London and Bushy Park will be listed in the appendix. From Jan 2010 all records of free-living Red-crested Pochard of captive ancestry will be re-classified as category C (naturalised). Records listed under other counties are those thought most likely to relate to wild birds. Records were received from 20 sites excluding the two sites with free-flying feral flocks (Regent's Park and Bushy Park).



Garganey *Anas querquedula* are always noteworthy in London. This drake (above) was at Regent's Park in mid-June, while Crossness hosted a smart juvenile (below) in August. (Tony Duckett and John Archer)



- Essex:** Fairlop Waters, one on Nov 12th. Walthamstow Res, one on July 16th. Wanstead Park a pair on Jan 13th, 15th & 23rd.
- Herts:** Amwell NR, peaks of ten on Nov 27th and five on Nov 28th. Bury Lake/Stockers Lake, varying numbers throughout year with peaks of 17 on Jan 8th, 16 on Jan 1st and Nov 10th, 15 on Jan 10th, and in October. Tyttenhanger GP, five on Nov 28th.
- Middx:** Brent Res, five on Sep 29th, five again on Oct 14th & 18th, finally one on Nov 22nd (seven individuals in total). Stoke Newington Res, a male on Nov 17th, two males on 19th, and a pair on 27th.
- Bucks:** Horton GP, five (3m, 2f) on Dec 22nd. Wryasbury GP, one on Jan 4th, two drakes on Sep 11th and three on 17th, then one on Oct 31st.
- Surrey:** Holmethorpe SP, max of seven in Aug and seven in Dec. London Wetland Centre, five on Nov 8th.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Status: common winter visitor and migrant, scarce breeder.

The highest count was a noteworthy 457 at Staines Res in January. An intensive season of atlas-related surveys revealed 20 broods at Walthamstow Res and from 10-15 broods at Rye Meads RSPB. The total number of broods was 67, a further increase on last year's 56-58. The number of sites reporting breeding was 15 compared to 14 last year.

The table below shows all monthly peak counts of over 70 birds (May omitted as no counts >70) and the sector text lists all breeding records (no. of broods in brackets) and all Inner London records.

| Common Pochard | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Jun | Jul | Aug | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|----------------|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | KGV | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 160 | - |
| | Walthamstow Res | - | - | - | 117 | 92 | - | - | - | - |
| Herts | Amwell GP | 80 | 86 | - | - | - | - | - | 53 | - |
| | Hilfield Park Res | 86 | 54 | - | 56 | 101 | 200 | - | - | 51 |
| | Stocker's & Bury Lakes | 270 | 88 | - | - | - | - | - | 74 | 60 |
| Middx | Brent Res | - | 69 | - | 75 | - | - | - | - | 137 |
| | KGVI Res | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 163 |
| | Staines Res | 457 | 56 | - | - | - | - | 147 | 188 | 342 |
| Bucks | Wraysbury GP | 180 | 170 | 93 | - | - | - | 150 | 87 | 191 |
| Surrey | Thorpe Water Pk | - | 96 | 50 | - | - | - | - | - | - |

Essex: Bedfords Park (1), Mayesbrook Park (1), Rainham GP (1), Walthamstow Res (20).

Herts: Maple Lodge (4), Rye Meads RSPB (15), Seventy Acres Lake (1), Stocker's Lake (1).

Middx: Alexandra Park (1), Brent Res (1), Clissold Park (4).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre (up to 6), Lonsdale Road (2), Pen Ponds (2).

In Lond: Battersea Park (4). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 50 in Jan. Regent's Park (1), 220 in Feb. St James's Park (1).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Status: regular resident breeder and common winter visitor.

The peak counts for Tufted Duck are recorded in the autumn when there are large eclipse flocks and during the winter. Q. Mother Res, Wraysbury GP and Walthamstow Res had monthly peaks of over 1,000 birds, the largest being 1,705 at Walthamstow Reservoirs on July 30th. Overall numbers were higher than in the previous two years with a longer list of sites reported.

A total of 41 sites reported breeding, the same as in 2008. Productivity was similar with 200 broods compared to 210 in 2008 and 148 in 2007. At several sites counts are made of juveniles but not broods, making the estimation of breeding population very problematic. Rye Meads Ringing Group reported 44 broods, including some very large broods, largest 17. At Walthamstow Res there was a creditable 21 broods with 96 ducklings.

Details of the largest breeding concentrations (no. of broods in brackets) are given in the notes section.

The table shows peak monthly counts of 100+ at the main sites (where 250 or more were recorded at some time; 50+ in Inner London).

| Tufted Duck | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------|----------------------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|-----|-----|-----|----------|-----|-----|
| Essex | KGV Res | - | - | - | - | - | - | 345 | - | - | - | 480 | - |
| | Roding, Creekmouth | 414 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 314 |
| | Walthamstow Res | - | - | - | 182 | 109 | 4751,705 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Herts | Stocker's Lake Cmplx | 241 | 181 | 189 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 117 | 306 | 152 |
| Middx | Brent Res | 177 | 171 | 162 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 186 | 302 |
| | KGVI Res | 416 | 143 | - | - | - | - | 490 | 971 | 382 | 245 | 138 | - |
| | Q. Mary Res | 684 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 140 | - | - | - | - |
| | Staines Res | 146 | 213 | 148 | - | - | 236 | 730 | 689 | 320 | - | 278 | 378 |
| Bucks | Horton GP | 421 | 544 | 160 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 294 | 331 |
| | Q. Mother Res | 1,430 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Wraysbury GP | 561 | 529 | 466 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9201,005 | 553 | - |
| Surrey | Island Barn Res | 160 | 163 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 171 | 316 | 198 | 182 |
| | Wetland Centre | 442 | 428 | 318 | 209 | 254 | 278 | 286 | 279 | 114 | - | 110 | 207 |
| | QE II Res | - | - | - | - | - | - | 186 | 370 | - | 519 | - | - |
| | Walton Res | 511 | 233 | 146 | - | - | 158 | 344 | 479 | 138 | 285 | 315 | 308 |
| In Lond | Canada/Surrey W | 193 | 94 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 89 | 70 |
| | Hyde Park | 120 | 237 | 146 | 127 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 53 | 152 |
| | Regent's Park | - | 170 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (5). Connaught Water (2). Ingrebourne Valley (3). Rainham Marshes (7). Walthamstow Res (21). Wanstead Flats (1). West Hamdon (2).

Herts: Aldenham Res (2). Amwell NR (6). Bury/Stocker's Lakes (6). Hampermill (6). Maple Lodge NR (c12). Rye Meads RSPB (44). Seventy Acres Lake (3). Troy Mill (6). Tyttenhanger GP (c4). Verulamium Park (3).

Middx: Alexandra Park (1). Boxer's Lake, Enfield (2). Hampstead Heath (1). Kempton NR (1). Staines Res (c3). Stanwell Moor (1). Waterlow Park (5).

Bucks: Orlitts Lakes (1).

Kent: Dartford (2). Foots Cray Meadows (2). Sevenoaks WR (1).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (8). Brockwell Park (2). Holmethorpe SP (14). London Wetland Centre (c9+). Richmond Park (3). Rushett Farm (2). South Norwood CP (1). Surbiton (1). Walton Res (2). Wandsworth Common (5).

In Lond: Battersea Park (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2). Regent's Park (8). St James's Park (2).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Status: regular but uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant, occasional large influxes during cold weather.

At least 30 birds were seen this year, with records from 12 separate sites, higher than in the previous four years. There was a long staying group of up to four birds in the Staines Res area which were reported from Jan 17th until the end of March, the last leaving on April 2nd. A second group of 1-7 birds were seen at Q. Mother Res, Wraysbury GP and Horton GP from Jan 3rd until early March, peaking at seven birds on the Q. Mother Reservoir on Jan 11th.



Coastal movements of Common Scoter Melanitta nigra can often entail 'overspill' in the London Area. This party of five constituted the first site record for Alexandra Park on 11 April. (Dominic Mitchell)

Essex: William Girling Res, a female on Jan 25th.

Herts: Stocker's Lake, two on Nov 3rd. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Sep 28th.

Middx: Brent Res, one on Sep 17th & 18th, a female on Nov 11th & 12th, one on Nov 22nd, and on Dec 20th. Staines Res, one on Jan 17th increasing to four by Feb 10th, then declining until last on April 2nd. One from June 19th to 28th with a second from June 26th to July 11th, then at KGVI until Aug 16th.

Bucks: Horton GP, three on Jan 15th rising to five on Feb 3rd and present until Feb 10th. Q. Mother Res, four on Jan 1st rising to seven by 11th, then five from Jan 13th to March 3rd. Wraysbury GP, five on Jan 18th, two on 31st, then one on Feb 1st. Singles on Nov 6th and Dec 22nd. These early year records are thought to relate to a mobile group of up to seven birds.

Kent: Greenhithe, one on Dec 27th.

Surrey: Island Barn Reservoir, five on Jan 9th, one on 11th.

In Lond: Hyde Park, one on Nov 10th; four on Nov 11th on the Serpentine.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Status: passage migrant and occasional winter visitor, never numerous.

2009 was a good year with nearly twice the number of birds compared to the previous year. There was a significant influx on Apr 11th with records at five sites totalling 43 birds including an impressive 24 at Rainham.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, 24 on the river on Apr 11th, six on 17th. Then one on Sep 15th and two on Oct 14th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Nov 11th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, five on April 11th. KGVI Res, one on April 4th, five on 11th. Q. Mary Res. one on Jan 17th. Staines Res, four from Apr 17th to 20th; one on Aug 1st-9th and on Sep 16th; three on Dec 1st. Stoke Newington Res, two on Oct 21st.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, two on Apr 17th, singles on July 3rd and Oct 15th.

Kent: Crossness, a pair on Apr 18th, one on Sep 15th.

Surrey: QE II Res, five on Apr 11th, one on July 31st. Walton Res, four on April 11th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Sep 17th.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Status: rare passage migrant and winter visitor.

This is a scarce bird in London and not necessarily annual. This year there was just one record.

Middx: Staines Res, a small flock of five (1m, 1imm m, 3f) was present all day on Apr 13th (BL *et al*).

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Status: common winter visitor, occasional summer record.

Common Goldeneye were present until end of April. There was a single bird over Horton GP on May 20th, which may have been the same bird reported at four West London sites in June and July, but the bulk of the wintering flocks returned in Oct/Nov and peaked after Christmas. After low counts in 2008 this years counts were higher with three sites reporting flocks of 60 or over at some point in the winter. The largest flock of the year was 67 at Wraysbury GP on Mar 8th. The largest counts are given in the table below, which lists all monthly peaks of 15 or more birds. Fifteen sites had counts of over ten birds. There were no Inner London records.

| Common Goldeneye | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | KGV Res | 25 | 40 | 30 | - | - | - | 22 |
| | Walthamstow Res | 17 | 22 | - | - | - | - | 13 |
| | Wm Girling Res | - | 30 | 35 | - | - | - | - |
| Herts | Amwell GP | 21 | 16 | 20 | - | - | - | - |
| | Stocker's Lake | 19 | 17 | 12 | - | - | - | 20 |
| Middx | Broadwater | 13 | 17 | - | - | - | - | - |
| | KGVI Res | 63 | 41 | 34 | - | 19 | 24 | 25 |
| | Staines Res | 27 | 49 | 60 | 16 | 19 | 24 | 25 |
| Bucks | Wraysbury GP | 62 | 48 | 67 | - | 10 | 33 | 34 |
| Surrey | Walton Res | 11 | - | 16 | - | - | - | - |

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Status: winter visitor in highly variable numbers.

The highest count in 2009 was ten at Wraysbury GP on Feb 8th (2008: two counts of ten or more, the highest being 12). There were a total of 16 records from five sites involving five or more birds. However the number of birds visiting remains in long term decline for unknown reasons. Counts of five or more birds and all Inner London records are given below.

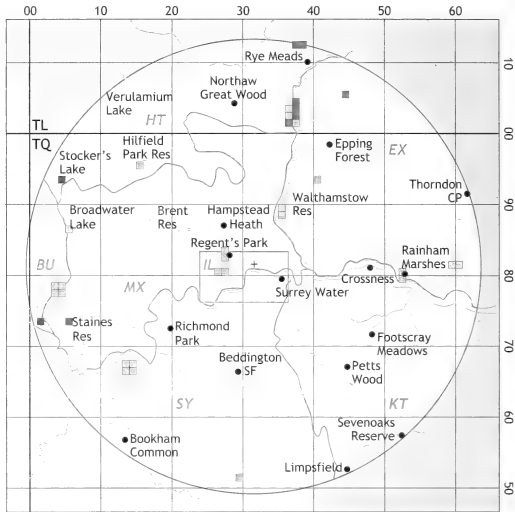
The map below shows the distribution of sightings across the LNHS area.

Essex: Holyfield Lake, seven on Jan 7th. Hooks Marsh Lake, six on Jan 20th, five on 24th and seven on 25th.

Herts: Bowyers Water, eight on Jan 30th.

Smew records per 1-km sq

- 75 - 101 (3)
- 17 - 75 (6)
- 1 - 17 (25)
- LNHS Area
- County boundaries



Based on data mapped by
Greenspace Information for
Greater London
www.gigl.org.uk

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Middx: Staines Res, five on Jan 4th, six on 6th, then eight on Mar 2nd, with five on 4th.
Bucks: Wraysbury GP, eight on Jan 4th, six on 7th, seven on 10th; ten on Feb 8th, and six on 10th; five on Dec 14th & 20th, and six on 21st.

In Lond: Hyde Park, one redhead on Jan 11th. Regent's Park, one redhead on six dates from Feb 27th until Mar 30th.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

In 2009 there were records received from ten sites relating to probably ten birds. There were two long-staying individuals, one on the Lee Valley reservoirs, the other on the Surrey reservoirs. There are two later records of a male at the QE II Res which was thought to be possibly the same bird following the acquisition of adult plumage. Records of a pair on the R. Thames by the Wetland Centre and two redheads at KGV Res were the only records of more than one bird. This a fairly low series of sightings compared to previous years. All records are listed.

Essex: Banbury Res, one redhead present on several dates from Jan 5th until Feb 17th.
KGV Res, a redhead on several dates from Jan 2nd until Mar 7th (probably same bird as Banbury records); two redheads on Nov 15th. Walthamstow Res, a redhead on Jan 31st, then a redhead on Dec 20th & 28th.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, a male on Apr 13th.

Middx: Staines Res, a redhead on Jan 19th, then a pair on Dec 2nd. Tottenham Marshes, on Jan 31st (same as Walthamstow Res).

In Lond: Hyde Park, up to eight present during year. Millennium Bridge, one on Thames on Feb 27th. Regent's Park, three on Dec 4th. St James's Park, up to eight present during year.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Status: breeding resident, of introduced origin.

Undoubtedly under-recorded, especially in Kent and Surrey, but many records may be of released birds. Nevertheless, it is faring considerably better than the Grey Partridge and there is a pattern of wandering birds into more urban environments mainly in the spring and autumn. Listed below are all records from the London boroughs, high counts from other sites and all breeding records (numbers of pairs/territories in brackets).

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley, one on Apr 26th, two on June 26th. Mar Dyke Valley (1) with 23 on Dec 8th. Navestock Hall Farm, 20 on Nov 24th. Orsett (8) with two juvs at Green Lane on July 5th and best counts of 67 on Nov 10th, 59 on Sep 2nd and 43 on Jan 15th. Stapleford Tawney, 15 on Dec 30th.

Herts: Brickendonbury, 25 on Oct 21st. Essendon (3), Gibions Wood (2). Little Berkhamsted, ten on Dec 25th. North Mymms Park, 80+ on Sep 12th. Northaw, 12 on Nov 14th. Prae Wood (2). Radlett (3). Redwell Wood Farm, 18 on Nov 15th. Tyttenhanger GP, 50+ on Aug 17th. Water End, ten on Nov 22nd. Wildhill, 12 on Apr 14th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on the pitch and putt course on Mar 17th, the same place as the last record in Mar 2007. Enfield area: Ferny Hill Farm, 18 on Nov 26th; Park Farm, 10+ on Sep 10th with 1-2 present in the breeding season; Parkside Farm, two on Mar 15th, Apr 20th and May 14th. Stoke Newington Res, one on Apr 13th was the first for the site. Wormwood Scrubs, singles on Apr 13th and Nov 3rd.

Kent: Northfleet, at least one on Jan 16th.

Surrey: The Oaks Farm, Carshalton, two on June 14th. South Norwood CP, one on Feb 25th was the fourth record for the site and the second year running.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Status: breeding resident, declining.

Similar showing to 2008 with just four confirmed pairs but no specific reports of broods. However, two double figure counts in Herts was encouraging. A summary of all records is given below with proven pairs, territories or broods in brackets. There was a Middx record of a pair at KGVI Res that the observer considered "obvious chuckouts".

Essex: Fishers Green, male on May 24th. Grey Goose Farm (4), with ten on Feb 1st. Rainham Marshes, four on Oct 15th. Rainham Village, two on Mar 27th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP, two on Apr 26th. Bell Lane, near London Colney, four on Feb 28th. Coursers Farm, one calling from maize on Sep 12th. Hatfield Park, one heard on Apr 29th. North Mymms Park, four records of up to two birds from Mar-Sep. Panshanger Golf Course, ten on Oct 8th. Redwell Wood Farm, 18+ on Jan 24th, 24+ on Feb 7th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on June 30th.

Kent: Otford to Filston, two on June 16th.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Status: rare summer visitor.

A typical showing of four birds and the Orsett observer deserves recognition for making it a hat-trick of annual records.

Essex: Orsett, recorded at Green Lane on July 18th (JA) & 24th (RBs).

Herts: Beech Farm GP, two flushed from beside path on June 26th (LM).

Bucks: Colnbrook, individual flushed from rough ground at Tanhouse Farm on Sep 5th & 6th (CDRH).

Kent: Filston Lane, Shoreham, singing male for a few days in June (JJS). Otford - Filston, two on June 16th likely to have included former (MC).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Status: common breeding resident, of introduced origin.

Whilst this remains the capital's commonest game bird it is clearly under-recorded especially within Greater London. All records from within the metropolitan boroughs are given along with all breeding/territorial activity (nos. of pairs/territories in brackets) and higher counts elsewhere.

Essex: Bonnets Wood, Upminster, five on Jan 5th, singles on Jan 6th and Apr 19th. Fairlop Waters, seven on Feb 14th and present in the breeding season. Hainault Forest, nine on Dec 30th with singles on Jan 11th and Mar 22nd. Mar Dyke Valley (1), with ten on Dec 26th. Rainham Marshes, 27 on Nov 5th.

Herts: Batlers Green (1). Garden Wood (1). Hatfield Park, 26 on Feb 8th. Hilfield Park Res (1). Maple Lodge (1). North Mymms Park, 41+ on Nov 15th. Rye Meads RSPB (2) with 15 on Dec 5th. Wildhill, 27 on Dec 21st.

Middx: Brent Res, male on north bank between Mar 21st and Apr 16th. Enfield area: Park Farm (1), female with seven young; Parkside Farm (1), female seen with one chick. Grovelands Park, female on Dec 13th. Home Park, one on Apr 9th, four on Nov 15th. Horsenden Hill, male between Mar 20th and Apr 14th. KGVI Res, male May 23rd. Staines Moor, two males Apr 18th. Stanwell Moor GP, (1-2). Tottenham Marshes (4). Totteridge Valley (6-8). Willowbank, Uxbridge, male on Jan 25th.

Kent: Crossness (3). Dartford Marshes, single on Aug 28th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles of both sexes early Jan to mid-July. Bookham Common, just one record received (noted as a common resident in 2008). Frays Farm Meadows, pair May 18th. Harlington Fields, both sexes late Feb - early Apr. Holmethorpe SP, recorded most months, with max of 11 Jan 10th and nine on Aug 3rd. Park Farm (1). Rushett Farm (1), also 2-3 on territory in same tetrad. South Norwood CP, two on Dec 19th. Walton Res, flew across road Apr 14th. West End Common (1).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one was present from Mar 16th to 20th, an unusual record here.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Status: scarce winter visitor and occasional migrant, often after hard weather.

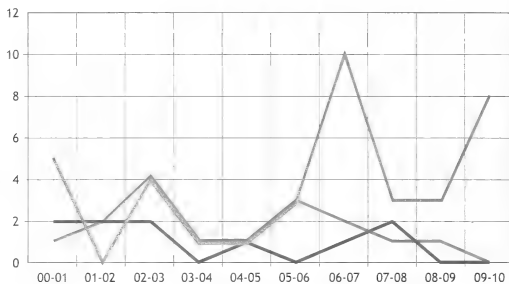
Probably four birds present in the first part of the year. Two juvs from 2008, one cross-billed and the other normal billed, remained in the Staines area until Apr 23rd and May

Divers

Minimum winter numbers in last ten years

Key

- Red-throated
- Black-throated
- Great Northern



Estimated minimum number of individuals seen in London Area during the last ten winters (for 09-10 the figure represents Nov/Dec 09 only).

10th respectively, being seen at Q. Mother Res, Staines Res and KGVI Res. There was also a juv at Island Barn Res on Jan 4th. An adult at Q. Mary Res on Jan 24th then moved to Island Barn Res where it was last seen on Feb 11th. In the Lee Valley, a juv was present from Jan 18th which also visited Stoke Newington Res, the first record for this site.

Seven birds, all juveniles, were present during Nov-Dec. The first was at Q. Mother Res on Nov 17th (FJM), followed by singles at Horton GP, Staines Res, and Q. Mother Res. Four were together on KGVI Res on Dec 1st, and another cross-billed bird at Island Barn Res on Dec 4th joined the KGVI birds the next day. By Dec 8th there were six on KGVI (KLP) which remained in the area into 2010. KGV Res and William Girling Res also hosted another bird from Nov 26th onwards. Away from these traditional sites, one was recorded at Amwell NR in Dec.

Essex: Walthamstow Res, juv Jan 24th to Feb 3rd. (PLT *et al*). William Girling Res, juv Jan 18th-22nd, Feb 24th to Mar 18th (RW *et al*), Nov 26th to Dec 19th, first seen on KGV Res (HLy).

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Dec 9th (BLa, CW).

Middx: KGVI Res, see above (mo). Staines Res, see above (mo). Q. Mary Res, adult on Jan 24th (REI). Stoke Newington Res, juv Feb 4th-15th (MJP). Wraysbury Res, one on Mar 30th (DJM).

Bucks: Horton GP, one on Nov 20th (CDRH). Q. Mother Res, see above (mo).

Surrey: Island Barn Res, see above (mo). QE II Res, juv on Dec 10th (DMH).

This was the only diver species recorded this year and it has been by far the most common diver recorded in London over the last ten years (see below). Although Red-throated is the next most common, it is the most difficult of the three to see as most are short-stayers.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Status: widespread breeding resident on most suitable waters, also passage migrant and winter visitor.

A total of c107 pairs were reported this year, a similar number to 2008 (c114 pairs). The species continues to be well represented across the London Area during both summer

and winter. A summary of breeding and wintering records, and maximum counts is given for each sector, with the no. of breeding pairs or broods given (in brackets) for urban sites and the more significant sites elsewhere.

Essex: 21+ breeding pairs at seven sites, present at five further sites during breeding season, including Walthamstow Res (9 broods). Records from 19 sites Jan-Feb and 13 sites Nov-Dec. Rainham Marshes, 53 on Sep 20th. Walthamstow Res, 30+ on Nov 15th.

Herts: c23 pairs at eight sites, including Hilfield Park Res (10 broods) and Maple Lodge NR (5). Present in breeding season at nine other sites. Reported from 22 sites Jan-Feb and 17 sites Nov-Dec (max 42, Rye Meads RSPB on Dec 19th).

Middx: 20 pairs at nine sites: Alexandra Park (2). Clissold Park (2). Finsbury Park (4 broods). Kempton NR (5). Pymmes Park (1). Records came from ten sites Jan-Feb and five sites Nov-Dec. Max 27, Brent Res on Aug 23rd.

Bucks: Records from three sites Jan-Feb, one in June and three Nov-Dec, max Wraybury GP, eight on Nov 24th.

Kent: Crossness (3+). Dartford (1). Present at ten sites Jan-Feb and seven Nov-Dec, max 16, Northfleet on Jan 17th.

Surrey: 17 breeding pairs at ten sites and present at five others. Records from 19 sites Jan-Feb and 14 sites Nov-Dec. Max 37, Walton Res on Oct 29th.

In Lond: Battersea Park (1), brood thought to have failed. Buckingham Palace, two during March. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), up to five all year. Regent's Park (2-3), max seven on Apr 16th. Greenland Dock, Rotherhithe, two on Dec 4th. St James's Park, up to four present all year.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Status: common breeding resident and winter visitor.

About 127 breeding pairs were recorded this year (115 in 2008). Like Little Grebe, this species has a scattered distribution across the area including urban parks, wherever suitable water bodies exist. In addition to the 7-9 pairs that bred in Inner London this year, single pairs also bred in Alexandra and Grovelands Park (Middlesex), Barking and Parsloes Parks (Essex), and Crystal Palace, Danson and Lamorbey Parks (Kent).

The total numbers of Great Crested Grebes peaked in the late summer and winter months (see graph). The January and December totals both include three figure counts from Q. Mother Res and may be exaggerated as no counts were received from this site in other months. The peak in late summer may relate to young birds being included in the counts. Interestingly, numbers at Queen Mary peak in these months whereas numbers at nearby QE II Res are at their lowest, suggesting local movement between these two sites.

Below is a summary by sector and other significant counts. The number of breeding pairs at selected localities is shown in brackets.

Essex: 14 breeding pairs at 13 sites. KGV Res, 52 on July 26th. Walthamstow Res (12 broods), 43 on June 2nd.

Herts: c45 pairs at 15 sites including: Hilfield Park Res (10 broods). Maple Cross area (5). Tyttenhanger GP (8+). Max count 47, Stocker's Lake on Oct 11th.

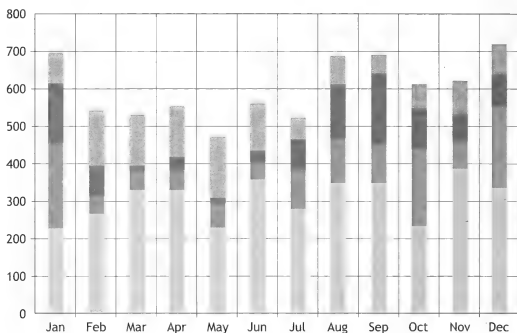
Middx: 24 pairs at nine sites, including Brent Res (15); Hampstead Heath (2). KGV I Res, 50 on Oct 10th. Staines Res, 72 on Aug 23rd. Wraybury GP, 86 on Oct 10th.

Great Crested Grebe

Maximum number reported each month

Key

- QE II
- Q. Mary
- Other Staines area sites
- Other sites



Maximum number of Great Crested Grebes reported.

Bucks: Four pairs (three sites). Q. Mother Res, 160 on Jan 8th.

Kent: 13+ pairs at seven sites, including Chipstead Lake (4).

Surrey: c12 pairs at five sites, including Walton Res (6 broods).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (6), 25 on Nov 8th. Regent's Park (4 pairs, 3 nested).

Rotherhithe, 11 on Feb 3rd including a pair displaying.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Only two records were received. The Queen Mother bird was moulting into winter plumage, and had previously been present at Calvert, Bucks (outside the LNHS area).

Middx: Staines Res, juv on Oct 4th (FJM *et al*).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, first-winter on Nov 8th, 11th, 17th-19th, 23rd & 25th (CDRH *et al*).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

After a disappointing two in 2008, there were perhaps as many as 12 this year, including four in summer plumage on Apr 12th. (Singles unless stated.)

Essex: KGV Res, Aug 31st (MSd). Fairlop Waters, Dec 20th (SBn).

Middx: KGV Res, Jan 1st-22nd (mo), two from Feb 4th to Mar 1st (KLP *et al*). Q. Mary Res, Apr 12th (REI).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, Nov 8th-9th (CDRH *et al*). Q. Mother Res, Dec 9th (CDRH).

Surrey: QE II Res, one Mar 13th, three on Apr 12th-17th, one on 18th (DMH, SJS).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Status: passage and winter migrant and rare breeder.

There was an encouraging increase in the number of confirmed breeding pairs at Site A, with as many as nine broods seen (this may be the highest ever recorded) and over 13

young fledged. Otherwise, a typical year with good numbers present on the regular wintering sites.

Monthly maxima from the most productive sites are listed in the table below, followed by records from other sites.

| Black-necked Grebe | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | William Girling Res | 24 | 8 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 22 | - | 8 | 12 | 13 |
| Middx | Staines Res | - | 9 | 9 | 5 | - | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - |

Essex: Fairlop Waters, four Oct 29th. KGV Res, singles June 14th, Sep 3rd & 27th. KGV Dock, one May 5th. Rainham Marshes, one Sep 21st. Walthamstow Res, singles Apr 3rd, July 7th, Sep 13th and from Oct 4th to Nov 1st.

Herts: Site A, maximum of 29 on Mar 28th. At least nine broods were seen.

Middx: Brent Res, one Apr 4th, Aug 16th, 21st-22nd and Aug 25th-Sep 4th. Littleton, one Sep 20th. KGVI Res, five Feb 14th, singles Feb 21st and Sep 11th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, four summer-plumage Apr 26th, first-winter Dec 22nd.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one Aug 30th.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, one Jan 2nd. Walton Res, one Aug 6th and Dec 24th-31st.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Status: rare visitor, usually in autumn.

One unfortunate bird was recorded, which never made it to the London seawatching 'hotspots' of Rainham and Crossness. Having reached as far as Greenhithe (opposite West Thurrock), it became a meal for a Great Black-backed Gull.

Kent: Northfleet, one flew west on Oct 11th (BEW). Presumably the same bird was then seen at Greenhithe, before being eaten (AL).



By mid-spring, northern breeders like Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus* are often in full breeding plumage, and make a fine - if incongruous - sight in London. This bird graced Island Barn Reservoir. (Dave Harris)

Leach's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Status: rare visitor, often during 'wreck' conditions.

The first record of this species since an influx of five birds occurred on Dec 7th 2006. It was seen by many observers during the late afternoon and evening.

Middx: Staines Res, one on Sep 30th (FJM *et al*).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Status: scarce visitor.

It is difficult to say exactly how many birds were involved in the sightings on Oct 5th-6th, which included a twitchable juvenile at Wraysbury GP that also visited Q. Mother Res and Staines Res and was seen diving. An estimate of three birds for these two days, plus one on Sep 30th, would make four birds for the year.

Herts: Stocker's Lake, adult on Oct 6th (PB).

Middx: Tottenham Marshes, juv flew south on Sep 30th (LB). Staines Res, juv on Oct 6th (RWa, PN, KLP).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, juv on Oct 6th (CDRH). Wraysbury GP, juv on Oct 5th-6th (PMC *et al*).

Kent: Crayford Marshes, imm flew west at 10:06 on Oct 6th (KJ). Belvedere, imm flew west at 11:50 on Oct 6th (IM).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Status: increasing breeding resident and common on suitable water bodies elsewhere, especially in winter.

This species is recorded all across London, particularly in winter when even very small lakes often host one or two individuals.

Breeding was confirmed from just four sites this year, with no count received from Broadwater Lake (46 nests in 2008). The count from Walthamstow Res is low as only one side of the islands was viewed. The colony at Q. Mary Res, established in 2004 (per Hershams Ringing Group), is now believed to be 'substantial', but the site is private and only a few nests can be viewed from the reservoir bank.

The table shows monthly maxima from regularly counted sites with larger aggregations of the species. Breeding records (number of nests in brackets) and notable counts from other localities are shown under the sector summaries.

| Cormorant | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----------|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Middx | Q. Mary Res | 539 | 300 | 63 | 21 | 14 | 15 | 22 | 44 | 39 | 14 | 16 | 77 |
| Surrey | Wetland Centre | 16 | 100 | 200 | - | 8 | 4 | 11 | 24 | 55 | 63 | 102 | 76 |
| | QE II Res | 476 | 210 | 195 | 38 | 28 | 25 | 63 | 91 | 195 | 65 | 88 | 180 |
| | Walton Res | 19 | 27 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 22 | 82 | 242 | 129 | 116 | 36 |

Essex: Fairlop Waters, 100 on Oct 19th. KGV Res, c200 on Sep 22nd. Rainham Marshes, 93 on Mar 15th. Walthamstow Res (125+), 295 on June 19th.

Herts: Amwell NR (15), 80 on Nov 10th. Hilfield Park Res, pair displaying on Mar 29th, nesting not confirmed. Stocker's Lake (2), 113 on Feb 4th.

Middx: KGV Res, 104 on Aug 23rd. Q. Mary Res (bred). Staines Res, 143 on Aug 23rd.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 145 on Oct 18th. Wraysbury GP, 134 on Jan 29th.

Kent: Crossness, 79 on Sep 24th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, 37 on Nov 28th. Island Barn Res, c40 on Jan 6th.

In Lond: Battersea, 132 just west of Chelsea Bridge on Mar 6th. Battersea Park, 50 on Oct 16th. Hyde Park/ Kensington Gdns, 53 on Nov 17th.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Status: irregular visitor, usually in winter, occasionally in good numbers.

Just two or three birds were seen this year, with the KGV and Walthamstow Res records possibly being the same bird. This is the lowest total since a blank year in 2004.

Essex: KGV Res, imm on Sep 3rd (DBn). Walthamstow Res, juv on Sep 13th (PLt).

Middx: Bromley-by-Bow, juv on Nov 27th (ELBF).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Status: scarce winter visitor, often returning to favoured sites.

This was a good year for this species in the London Area. Records came from 14 sites in the first winter period (compared to three in 2008) and eight sites in the second winter period (five in 2008). As has been the case in recent years, the majority of the records came from Amwell NR, Cheshunt GPs and the London Wetland Centre. Single birds were reported booming at Amwell NR in Apr and Cheshunt GPs in May; a spectacular sound to hear in the London Area.

Essex: Holyfield Lake, one on Jan 1st. Ingrebourne Valley, one on three dates in Jan and Feb, with two on Feb 6th; singles on two dates in Nov with three on Nov 2nd. Rainham, one flying towards the RSPB reserve on Mar 4th. Rainham Marshes, one on Mar 7th. Walthamstow Res, singles on Jan 9th (see Middx record below) and Sep 1st.

Herts: Amwell NR, after two on Jan 1st, single birds up to Apr 26th including one booming and again from Nov 7th. Hilfield Park Res, one on Dec 27th. Maple Lodge NR, singles from Mar 9th to Apr 3rd. Rye Meads RSPB, up to two birds Jan-Feb. Seventy Acres Lake, up to two birds in first winter period. One booming bird in early May and then up to two birds from Dec 11th. Stocker's Lake, one on three dates in Jan and Feb. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Jan 21st-22nd.

Middx: Brent Res, one Jan 17th. Lea Navigation, one between Springfield Park and Walthamstow Res on Jan 9th (may have been in Essex). Stoke Newington Res, one on Oct 28th was the first record for this site.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, recorded regularly between Jan 3rd and Mar 26th, with a peak count of three; recorded regularly from Oct 16th max three towards end of Dec. Sanderstead, one photographed in *leylandii* in Mitchley Ave on Jan 10th. Thorpe Park, one on Feb 28th.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Status: rare breeder and visitor in ever increasing frequency and number.

Records were received from only c125 sites in 2009, compared to c135 sites in 2008. However, an increasing number of sites held birds in all but the summer months. In the Colne Valley, the Broadwater Lake roost peaked at 48 on Jan 24th-25th. Numbers at



This tree-dwelling Bittern Botaurus stellaris at Springfield Marina on the River Lea in Tottenham on 9 January made for an extraordinary sight, particularly when it adopted this threat posture. (Mark Pearson)

Rainham Marshes again peaked in mid-summer, with 26 on July 3rd (compared to 56 in 2008). There was a notable gathering of 18 birds at William Girling Res on Aug 9th. The table below gives monthly maxima for some localities.

Successful breeding took place again at Walthamstow Res, where five pairs produced eight broods, with a total of 28 young fledged. A pair also fledged three young at Wraysbury GP (where they bred in 2007).

| Little Egret | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | Ingrebourne Valley | 3 | 2 | 3 | - | 1 | - | 10 | 4 | 2 | - | 1 | - |
| | Rainham Marshes | 4 | 12 | 18 | 16 | 9 | 15 | 26 | 18 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 3 |
| | Walthamstow Res | - | - | 1 | 2 | 14 | 14 | - | 6 | 10 | 13 | - | 10 |
| Herts | Amwell NR | 18 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 17 | 16 |
| | Stocker's Lake | 10 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 21 | 3 |
| Kent | Sevenoaks WR | 10 | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | 12 | 3 |
| Surrey | Beddington Farmlands | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 12 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |

In Lond: Paddington Green, one flew high NW on Oct 19th. Tower Bridge, four flew upriver on July 21st.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Status: rare vagrant.

There were three records of single birds, none of which lingered. They are the 13th to 15th records for London.

Essex: Ilford, one on Apr 5th (DE-H). Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 14th (PPn).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one flew east on Sep 24th (RK).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Status: common breeding resident.

A total of c523 nests were reported, an increase on the 473 in 2008, in part reflecting the inclusion this year of data from a number of additional established heronries. Details of all heronries for which we have data are given below, with the no. of nests in brackets, followed by a few of the highest counts outside the breeding period.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley (15). Mayesbrook Park (4). Netherhall GP (33). Waltham Abbey (3). Walthamstow Res (92). Warren Gorge (5). Rainham Marshes, 50 on Oct 11th.

Herts: Amwell NR (22). Frogmore GP (5). Stanborough Lakes (1). Stocker's Lake (34). Tyttenhanger GP (2). Verulamium Park (16).

Middx: Broadwater Lake (12). Kempton Park Res (34). Little Britain Lake (8). Yiewsley Lake, no nests this year.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res (3). Wraysbury GP (15).

Kent: Crystal Palace Park (1). Kelsey Manor (30). Sevenoaks WR (1). Swanscombe Marshes (9).

Surrey: Beddington Park (5). Bookham Common (19). Corporation Island, Richmond (19). Frays Wildfowl Lake (7). Gatton Lake (29). Horton CP (12). London Wetland Centre (2). Morden Hall Park (9). Richmond Park (7). Watermeads (7). Beddington Farmlands, 88 on Nov 1st.

In Lond: Battersea Park (27). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, ten, mostly juvs, on June 23rd. Regent's Park (29).



*The largest colony of Grey Herons *Ardea cinerea* in the London Area is at Walthamstow Reservoirs. Over-flying birds are frequently seen near by. (Mike Lewis)*

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Status: rare vagrant.

There were five records, but three of the Apr records were of the same first-summer bird, initially seen at Walthamstow Res.

Essex: Walthamstow Res, an immature bird was found on Apr 23rd. It was last seen leaving the site early morning on Apr 25th (PLt).

Middx: Staines Res, one seen from the causeway flying over Stanwell and Heathrow between 18:45 and 19:00, before heading off NE on Apr 26th (REI and KLP).

Kent: Crossness, a first-summer bird arrived from the west at 08:25 on Apr 25th. It was seen to fly off E at 14:00 on Apr 27th (JKA).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, juv on Aug 1st (PSs *et al*).

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Status: rare vagrant.

There were three records in the spring, all in Essex, which may have been the same bird.

Essex: Canning Town, one NE on Apr 28th (JS). Gants Hill, one NW on May 5th (ATH). Holyfield Hall Farm, one seen distantly south of Galleyhill Wood on Apr 25th, headed off NE (RW).

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Status: rare vagrant.

The record below constitutes the fourth record for the London Area, following hot on the heels of the third in 2008.

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, one on Sep 21st (SBk).

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Status: rare migrant not recorded annually.

At least three birds at Rainham in the spring, then one in Dec. Singles in May at Brent Res and Beddington Farmlands could mean six birds were involved.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, an adult on Apr 28th (THo); two adults and an immature on May 6th (SG, MG and HV), with the immature subsequently being seen on May 7th, 11th-12th and an adult possibly seen on May 7th; an immature on Dec 22nd (DSm, RS and D MG).

Middx: Brent Res, an adult May 16th present for five and a half hours (AHs *et al*).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on May 11th before flying NE (KM).

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Status: scarce visitor.

Only three records this year, although there were several reports where no details were received (see Appendix III).

Essex: Rainham Marshes, single on Aug 23rd (DMn).

Middx: Alexandra Park one on June 3rd (DML, IL, DCn), and Sep 19th (RJW).

Black Kite *Milvus migrans***Status:** rare vagrant.

The first London records since 2004 and if one bird was involved in all the Essex sightings, only the eighth and ninth in all.

Essex: Bedfords Park, one May 7th (JB). Navestock, one May 9th (JP). Weald Bridge, one May 4th (ARd). Weald Park, one May 3rd (ASt) & 8th (VHF). All these sightings may relate to the same bird.

Middx: Stoke Newington Res, one Apr 13th (MJP).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus***Status:** scarce but increasing visitor.

This superb raptor continues its inexorable spread into our Area. This year there were approximately 520 records (325 in 2008), although clearly a lot of duplication is involved with many of the sightings coming from just a few regions; indeed 180 of these sightings came from just two localities in the northwest. The distribution of sightings throughout the year was very similar to 2008 with a clear peak in March, April (90 sightings) and May, then a gradual decline during the rest of the year with December being the least popular month.

| Red Kite sightings | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 38 | 40 | 61 | 90 | 78 | 54 | 32 | 36 | 26 | 27 | 21 | 17 |

Unlike last year (when no more than three birds were seen together) there were two sightings of seven birds, seven records of four birds and 15 of three birds, although many of these were close to potential breeding areas. There was one report of successful breeding at Site A where they have bred for the last three years, breeding was also suspected at three other sites; all these sites were in Herts and all close to the outer periphery of our area. It is very likely that several pairs are actually breeding in London, but clearly proving breeding is a difficult task, particularly given the necessity to avoid disturbance.

Not surprisingly Herts dominates the sightings table with a huge 378 records, with Middx being the next best county with a mere 38!

| Red Kite by county | Essex | Herts | Middx | Bucks | Kent | Surrey | In Lond |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|---------|
| | 35 | 378 | 38 | 13 | 13 | 34 | 9 |

All Inner London records are given below:

In Lond: Bloomsbury, one on June 2nd. Little Venice, one on Aug 19th. London Wall, one on June 8th. Regent's Park, singles on Apr 13th & 20th, May 3rd and Sep 20th. Rotherhithe, one on Apr 21st and the same at Tower Bridge also on Apr 21st.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus***Status:** scarce, but increasing passage migrant.

An excellent year with 121 records of about 69 birds, probably the best year ever; 60% of these were at Rainham. There were no obvious peaks of passage through the area, although the best months were April, May and August and there were none recorded in Feb.

Essex: Aveley, one on Oct 12th. Bedfords Park, one on Apr 1st. Fairlop Waters, one on Jan 18th. Holyfield Hall Farm, one on Sep 9th. Ingrebourne Valley, singles on Apr 14th, May 23rd, Oct 13th and Dec 11th. Rainham Marshes, there were sightings in an impressive 11 months of the year, with 21 sightings in Dec.

Herts: Marshalswick, one Jan 5th. Rye Meads RSPB, one Apr 27th, two Apr 29th and one Sep 5th. Tyttenhanger GP, singles July 18th, Aug 6th, 17th & 23rd.

Middx: Brent Res, one on Aug 22nd. Staines Res, singles on May 11th, Aug 2nd and Dec 13th. Stoke Newington Res, singles on Apr 15th and Sep 24th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Apr 24th. Wryasbury, one on Dec 13th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, one on Sep 11th. Crossness, one on Apr 1st and Aug 7th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles Mar 19th, Apr 14th, May 9th, Aug 18th & 21st, Sep 10th, Oct 7th and Nov 8th. Holmethorpe SP, female Sep 16th. Island Barn Res, one Aug 11th. London Wetland Centre, singles Apr 15th & 21st and Aug 23rd.

| Marsh Harrier | Jan | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Records | 2 | 2 | 14 | 17 | 5 | 3 | 24 | 12 | 6 | 12 | 24 |
| Birds | 2 | 2 | 15 | 13 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 6 |

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Status: scarce migrant; formerly a regular winter visitor to the Thames-side marshes.

About six individuals were seen during the year, all of which were ringtails. After a blank year in 2008 Rainham Marshes bounced back with four records.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, ringtails on Sep 27th (RBs), Nov 4th (JMj) & 15th (PPn) and Dec 14th (PSt).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, a first-winter on Mar 10th and 12th (CDRH).

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Status: rare migrant.

Two records, including a splendid adult male that spent a short time at Rainham Marshes allowing many observers to see it.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, an adult male from Aug 24th to 25th (AT, PSt, DSm, HV).

Middx: Brent Res, a ringtail flew SSW on Sep 13th (RB).

Kent: Crayford Marshes, the male from Rainham flew south on Aug 25th (DML).



Harrier sp

In Lond: A ringtail on Sep 9th (ARD).

Montagu's Harrier Circus pygargus has appeared in the London Area in three out of the last four years. This fine male was present intermittently in late August at the harrier hot-spot of Rainham Marshes. (Simon West)

Perhaps looking for its eponymous prey that also occasionally appears inside supermarkets, this adult male Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* was an extraordinary sight in Sainsbury's, Chafford Hundred, in September. (David Darrell-Lambert)

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Status: common breeding resident.

There was a slight reduction in the number of sightings this year down to about 1,000 (1,100 in 2008 and 1,200 in 2008); probably this falls within the expected normal recording fluctuations. Rather surprisingly the number of records in each county altered quite a lot. Last year over half the records fell within the Surrey sector, but this year the distribution was 28% in Herts, 25% in Middlesex, 19% in Surrey, 15% in Essex and 10% in Kent. It is likely that this just reflects under-recording that fluctuates from year to year. The only prey item reported this year was Woodpigeon, although interestingly one bird was seen chasing a bat.



Breeding season records are summarised in the table below.

| Sparrowhawk | Essex | Herts | Middx | Bucks | Kent | Surrey | In Lond | Total |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|---------|-------|
| Territories | 8 | 20 | 17 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 1 | 62 |
| Proved | 2 | 12 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 1 | 37 |

The number of territories increased to 62, up from 44 in 2008, but still less than the totals of 87 in 2007 and 119 in 2006. However, the number of proved breeding pairs increased dramatically to 37 (up from 25 in 2008, 24 in 2007 and 11 in 2006). It is likely the true breeding population is well into three figures, but only a thorough census would get close to an accurate figure.

In Lond: Records were received from: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Lambeth, Paddington Green, Poland Street, Regent's Park, Rotherhithe, St James's Park and Victoria.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Status: scarce but increasing breeder, regular migrant/visitor.

This large raptor remains the most commonly reported raptor in London, probably because of its visibility and the fact that almost all sightings are submitted to recorders. There is no doubt that this impressive raptor continues to spread across the London Area. Herts remains the most favoured county with about 52% of all records, but its lead is falling with Middlesex, Surrey and Essex all getting 14%.

An absolute minimum of 61 pairs was present during the breeding season (an impressive increase on 38 pairs in 2008 and 16 in 2007), of which at least nine pairs raised young (down from 22 in 2008). In reality, many of the birds that were on territory also probably bred successfully as well. The vast majority of the territorial pairs (46 out of 61) were in Herts most in the NW part, these records largely down to the efforts of one observer (CME). There were no reports of breeding in Middx, Bucks or Kent, but this is probably not the true picture.

The peak months were April and September, followed by March and May reflecting the passage of birds across the region. Unlike last year, the most impressive movements took place in spring with counts of 19 birds passing over Beddington Farmlands on Apr 20th, followed by 20 birds on Apr 21st and 22nd. The peak days of passage were 35 birds logged on Apr 26th and 29 birds on Sep 19th.

Essex: Three pairs bred successfully, another pair almost certainly bred and a further pair was present during the breeding season.

Herts: Six pairs bred successfully, another pair probably bred and at least a further 39 pairs were on territory during the breeding season and suspected of having bred.

Surrey: Up to ten pairs were present in the breeding season.

In Lond: Battersea Park, one on Oct 4th. Bishopsgate, one on Feb 19th. Chelsea, one on Feb 27th. Dulwich, one on May 14th. Earls Court, one on June 2nd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Apr 3rd and Sep 24th. London Wall, two on June 8th. Millbank, one on Feb 19th. Paddington Green, one on Mar 2nd, two on Apr 21st and singles Sep 19th and Oct 15th. Peckham Rye, one on Mar 21st. Regent's Park, singles on Mar 24th, Apr 13th & 20th, Sep 5th & 20th. Rotherhithe, one on Sep 19th..

Osprey Pandion haliaetus

Status: scarce passage migrant.

This fantastic and unique raptor is always guaranteed to provide a highlight of any birder's year anywhere, let alone in London. This year's total of 34 came up well short of 2008's record total of 57, but was still the second best year ever in London. However, there was probably considerable duplication of records between sites in the autumn, particularly with the nine sightings in the Rickmansworth, Loudwater and Stocker's Lake area between Aug 14th and Nov 21st - a time of year when juveniles tend to loiter for a while, particularly if they locate a friendly trout farm! Certainly, the continued success of this bird as a breeding species in the UK, with well over 200 pairs annually, increases the likelihood of birds passing over London, either on spring or autumn passage.

The first birds of the year were on Apr 1st. Nine more birds passed through before the end of April and four more in May. The first returning bird in the autumn was on Aug 14th. One bird visited a garden pond in Loudwater on several occasions between Sep 13th and Oct 13th. In total there were eight sightings in August, seven in September and two in October. Finally two very late records in November: over Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on 5th and another over Loudwater (again!) on 21st. (All records below were singles.)

Essex: Dagenham Chase, Apr 18th. Holyfield Hall Farm, Apr 1st. Ilford, May 13th. Rainham Marshes, Apr 16th & 18th. Wennington, May 10th. Woodford Green, Aug 19th.

Herts: Bury Lake, Aug 29th. Cole Green, Sep 28th. Hilfield Park Res, Sep 1st. Loudwater,

Sep 13th & 25th, Oct 13th and Nov 21st. Park Street, Sep 1st. Rickmansworth, Aug 14th. Rye Meads RSPB, Apr 18th, Aug 19th and Sep 5th. Seventy Acres Lake, Apr 22nd. Stocker's Lake, Aug 19th & 21st and Oct 10th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, May 4th. Isleworth, Apr 7th. KGVI Res & Staines Moor, Aug 16th. Staines Res, Apr 25th. Stoke Newington Res, Apr 1st.

Kent: Brockley, May 12th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, Apr 7th and Aug 30th. Sanderstead, Sep 12th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, on Nov 5th (DTM). Regent's Park, Apr 26th (ARD).

Kestrel Falco tinnunculus

Status: common breeding resident.

At least 27 pairs were proved to have bred this year, (up from 24 in 2008, but still down on 33 in 2007); in addition there were at least another 43 pairs on territory many of which almost certainly bred. Overall there was very little change in the totals of recent years and probably will not change much without a proper census. As was the case with Common Buzzard there was a strong bias towards the Herts sector largely through the efforts of one observer again (CME) in just a relatively small proportion of this county. If there was a proper census across the whole London Area it is likely to come up with many more pairs (for instance at least 45 pairs were reported from Surrey in 2006, compared with just ten this year). The highest count of the year was nine over Staines Moor on Aug 16th. Prey items reported this year included: House Sparrow, rodents, insects and earthworms.

Records of pairs in the breeding season are shown in the table below.

| Kestrel | Essex | Herts | Middx | Bucks | Kent | Surrey | In Lond | Totals |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|---------|--------|
| Proved | 2 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 27 |
| Probable | 3 | 21 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 43 |
| Overall totals | 5 | 30 | 16 | 0 | 5 | 10 | 4 | 70 |

In Lond: Bloomsbury, three on July 6th. Buckingham Palace, Mar 23rd. Fulham, one on July 3rd and five on July 6th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 12th, Mar 18th, Apr 16th, Nov 4th and Dec 19th. Lansdowne Green Estate, one pair raised four young. Paddington Green, singles on Jan 7th, Feb 8th and Apr 1st. Regent's Park, two pairs bred, one of which raised four young. Rotherhithe, one on Apr 23rd. Soho, one on Apr 2nd. Stockwell, one pair bred successfully. Tower Bridge, three displaying on Mar 16th. Vauxhall, one on Aug 13th. Victoria, singles on Mar 24th and July 13th.

Merlin Falco columbarius

Status: scarce migrant and winter visitor.

There were about 35 sightings this year, again fairly evenly split between each half of the year, although there was clearly some duplication with the 14 Rainham sightings, which may mean the number of birds was closer to 27. The last spring record was at Rainham Marshes on Apr 11th and the first in autumn was over Staines Moor on Aug 29th.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, one on Nov 9th. Fairlop Waters singles on Mar 26th and Nov 4th.

Ingrebourne Valley, singles on Jan 3rd and Oct 4th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Jan 19th

& 22nd, Feb 21st & 22nd, Mar 16th, Apr 11th, Oct 3rd, 4th, 7th, & 12th, Nov 9th & 10th, Dec 11th & 28th. South Ockenden, one on Jan 18th. Warren Gorge, one on Feb 1st.

Herts: Beech Farm GP, one on Jan 22nd. North Watford, one on Feb 7th. Site withheld, one on several dates in March and April.

Middx: Abney Park Cemetery, one on Mar 2nd. Brent Res, singles on Sep 18th and Nov 8th. Stoke Newington Res, one on Nov 11th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Mar 13th.

Kent: Crossness, one on Oct 16th.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

Now the second most commonly reported raptor after Common Buzzard with over 1,000 records during the year. The first arrival of the year was at Beddington on Apr 13th, with further sightings scattered across London from the following day. There were a further 54 sightings by the end of the month, with the peak count being four birds at three different sites. There were almost daily sightings during May and the highest count was

Hobby Falco subbuteo can be readily encountered in the summer months, but views of birds up close when perched, like this September juvenile at Staines Reservoirs, are exceptional. (Andrew Moon)



11 over Cheshunt on 9th. There were further sightings of eight birds at three different sites. The peak counts this spring were disappointingly well down on the peaks of 2008 when up to 21 were seen at Seventy Acres Lake and ten at Amwell.

In the autumn, no more than six birds were seen together, again lower than the equivalent counts in 2008. There were sightings every day in September. After that there were just four records in October: singles over Staines Moor on 1st, Wraysbury GP on 2nd, Horton GP on 6th and finally that last bird over Brent Res on 9th.

| Hobby pairs breeding | Essex | Herts | Middx | Surrey | Totals |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| Probable | 0 | 20 | 1 | 3 | 24 |
| Proved | 3 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 16 |
| Totals | 3 | 24 | 7 | 6 | 40 |

The above table gives details of breeding records. The total of 40 proved and probable pairs is close to the previous record of 41 in 2006, although 16 proved pairs was well down on the record 26 pairs in 2006. This is very encouraging; even though the true totals are probably far higher it is much closer to the likely figure than has been the case in some previous years. The picture presented is one of a very successful summer visitor, which in all likelihood is continuing to increase.

Details of Inner London records are given below.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles May 4th & 11th. Paddington Green, singles May 3rd, Sep 5th, two on 20th & 27th. Regent's Park, one Sep 2nd, two on 6th, singles Sep 9th, 11th & 20th. Vauxhall, one June 14th.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Status: scarce breeder and an increasingly regular breeding resident and winter visitor.

There were over 800 records this year (another annual record), 300 coming from the most favoured three localities: Beddington Farmlands (137), London Wetland Centre (100) and Rainham Marshes (85) - where birds were seen in every month of the year. There were also two other places where birds were seen throughout the year. As last year, records were scattered pretty evenly throughout the year, with the winter months generally producing the most sightings. Although, interestingly, April proved to be the peak month with about about 100 records.

An impressive 19 pairs attempted to breed this year (15 in 2008), five of which successfully fledged 11 juveniles (thanks again to DMn for this information). All of these are an increase on the 2008 figures. Five pairs were known to have failed, but at least eight other pairs may well have raised young.

Essex: Recorded from about 25 different sites (150 records), with the most regular being Rainham Marshes where up to three birds were seen together on several occasions. Five pairs were again present: only one pair was successful (1 young), two pairs failed and two other pairs were present.

Herts: Recorded from about 20 localities during the year (80 records); most records involved single birds although two birds were seen in the Lee Valley on several occasions. The majority of sightings came from the upper Lee Valley, with a few reports from the Colne Valley, the St Albans area and Tyttenhanger. There were no breeding records.

Middx: Recorded from at least 17 localities (77 records), an increase on 2008. Nearly half the records came from the Staines area, where up to two birds were seen during the year. Other multiple sightings came from Alexandra Park, East India Dock Basin, Tower Hamlets and Wormwood Scrubs. Two pairs were present, one of which raised two juveniles and the other failed.

Bucks: One pair was present during the summer and there were sightings in this sector in every month of the year.

Kent: Recorded from only ten localities (down from 16 in 2008) this year, the majority of sightings came from Crossness (up to two birds), with Lewisham being the next most numerous locality, as well as Albany Park and Sevenoaks. Three pairs were present, none of which were proved to have bred.

Surrey: There were over 300 records again this year, with the vast majority coming from just two sites - Beddington Farmlands (up to two birds) and London Wetland Centre (up to three birds). Sightings of up to two birds also at QE II Res. Four pairs were present: two pairs were successful (2 young in each) and the other two may have bred.

In Lond: Recorded most frequently from Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Paddington Green, Regent's Park (14 sightings during the year). Several other sites recorded birds but were either at or close to breeding areas so have been omitted. Four pairs were present: one pair was successful (4 young), two pairs failed and one other pair may have bred.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Status: common, but elusive, winter visitor; scarce breeder.

Reported from 73 sites (69 in the two previous years). Breeding behaviour was noted or young seen at only two sites, with a total of only four pairs (c11 pairs in 2008), but birds were recorded in June and July at a further 11 sites.

A staggering 41 were recorded during a tape luring survey at the London Wetland Centre on Dec 4th. The highest count at this site using conventional methods was a mere 12, further evidence, if any was needed, of this species ability to remain undetected.

All breeding records are given (no. of pairs in brackets), followed by some of the highest counts of wintering birds (counts of two or more birds within the London boroughs and three or more elsewhere) and all records for Inner London.

Essex: Dagenham Chase, three on Jan 1st. Ingrebourne Valley, ten on Mar 14th. Rainham Marshes (1); 31 on Jan 15th and 16 on Dec 20th. Walthamstow Res, four on Dec 9th. Warren Gorge, five on Jan 4th.

Herts: Amwell NR, up to ten in first winter period and up to three in second winter period. Seventy Acres Lake, five on Jan 18th. Cassiobury Park, three on Feb 3rd. Hilfield Park Res, four on Jan 3rd. Rye Meads RSPB (3); nine on Jan 3rd. Scotsbridge Mill, three on Feb 14th, Mar 4th and Dec 25th. Tyttenhanger GP, four on Jan 3rd.

Middx: Brent Res, four on Feb 8th and Nov 22nd. Kempton NR, three on Dec 19th. Stoke Newington Res, three in first winter period and four in second winter period.

Kent: Sutcliffe Park, two on Dec 20th. Swanscombe Marshes, eight on Jan 3rd and 13 on Dec 30th.

Surrey: Anton Crescent Wetlands, three on Jan 3rd and Feb 28th. Beddington Farmlands, three on Oct 4th. Holmethorpe SP, three on Jan 13th. London Wetland Centre, 41 on Dec 4th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 2nd & 12th, Feb 1st, Oct 21st and Dec 8th. Regent's Park, up to three on several dates in Jan and Feb; up to two in Oct and Dec. St James's Park, one on Mar 31st.

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

Status: scarce migrant.

After a blank year in 2008, this was a good year for this scarce migrant, with four records. The autumn birds at Rainham Marshes and the London Wetland Centre were both enjoyed by many observers. The January bird at Warren Gorge was a surprising winter record and proved elusive. (All were singles.)

Essex: Fairlop Waters, April 2nd (DE-H). Warren Gorge, Jan 3rd & 12th-13th (RBs, DGDL). Rainham Marshes, Oct 27th-28th (KR, JSm *et al*).

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, Sep 13th to Oct 9th (NP *et al*).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Status: very common breeding resident.

Recorded at c111 sites (Essex: 18, Herts: 32, Middx: 18, Bucks: 1, Kent: 10, Surrey: 29, In Lond: 3), just shy of last year's total of 118 sites.

Breeding was reported from 46 sites (Essex: 5, Herts: 8, Middx: 9, Kent: 4, Surrey: 18, In Lond: 2), but these figures can only represent a small fraction of the total breeding population.

All sites with five or more nesting pairs are given below (no. of pairs, nests or broods in brackets), followed by some of the highest counts outside the breeding season with more than 30 birds and all records for In Lond.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley (14); 106 on Feb 22nd. Rainham Marshes, 243 on Dec 20th. Valentines Park, 53 on Oct 31st.

Herts: Aldenham Res, 54 on Sep 23rd. Amwell NR, 35 on Sep 19th. Hampermill Lake, 43 on Mar 14th. Maple Lodge NR, 40 on Jan 8th & 29th. Rye Meads RSPB, 78 on Oct 10th. Tyttenhanger GP (9). Verulamium Park, 37 on Feb 19th.

Middx: Brent Res, 133 on Oct 31st. Horsenden Hill (21).

Kent: Crossness, 52 on Jan 4th. Danson Park, 40 on Jan 29th. Swanscombe Marshes, 42 on Aug 31st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 147 on Dec 1st. London Wetland Centre (20); 256 on Nov 11th. R. Wandle, Carshalton-Wandsworth, 191 on Dec 28th. Walton Res (9). Wimbledon Common (13).

In Lond: Battersea Park (12). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 21 on June 1st. Regent's Park (6).

Coot *Fulica atra*

Status: very common breeding resident and winter visitor.

Recorded at c135 sites (Essex: 26, Herts: 33, Middx: 22, Bucks: 4, Kent: 7, Surrey: 38, In Lond: 5), compared with 128 sites in 2008. An impressive 1,019 were counted at Brent Res on Oct 11th.

Breeding was reported from 56 sites (Essex: 7, Herts: 17, Middx: 11, Bucks, 1. Kent: 2,

Surrey: 17, In Lond: 1). As with Moorhen, these figures can only represent a tiny fraction of the total breeding population.

All sites with 10 or more nesting pairs are given below (no. of pairs, nests or broods in brackets), followed by some of the highest counts (200 or more in outer London, 100 or more in Inner London).

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, 200 on Dec 20th. Grange Waters, 541 on Dec 5th. Holyfield Lake, 710 on Nov 7th. Ingrebourne Valley (10). KGV Res, 760 on Nov 7th. Mayesbrook Park, 103 on Jan 31st. Rainham Marshes, 242 on Jan 10th. Valentines Park, 115 on Feb 15th. Walthamstow Res (12).

Herts: Aldenham Res (15); 362 on Oct 10th. Amwell NR, 535 on Dec 19th. Batchworth Lake (15). Bowyers Water, 494 on Jan 18th. Helicon Lake, 233 on Dec 21st. Hilfield Park Res (11); 334 on Jan 18th. Hooks Marsh Lake, 210 on Jan 17th. Maple Lodge NR (10). North Met Pit, 245 on Nov 21st. Pynesfield North Lake, 243 on Feb 4th. Rye Meads RSPB, 610 on Sep 27th. Seventy Acres Lake, 400 on Dec 21st. Stanstead Abbots GP, 258 on Nov 21st. Stocker's Lake (10); 544 on Nov 23rd. Troy Mill Lake, 435 on Sep 22nd. Tyttenhanger GP (23).

Middx: Brent Res (21); 1,019 on Oct 11th. Broomfield Park (13). Horsenden Hill (15). KGV Res, 359 on Sep 20th. Staines Res, 503 on Aug 23rd. Stoke Newington Res, 360 on Dec 23rd. Wraysbury Res, 397 on Oct 10th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, 811 on Nov 24th.

An unusually long stay for Inner London, this Oystercatcher Haematopus ostralegus was present in the Southwark Park/Greenland Dock area intermittently from 5-16 March. (Richard Bonser)





Although Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta can be encountered elsewhere on the Thames, and sometimes at other sites, West Thurrock remains the place to see the species in numbers in winter. (David Darrell-Lambert)

Surrey: London Wetland Centre (25); 360 on Sep 30th. QE II Res, 210 on Sep 20th. R. Wandle, Butler Hill-Morden Hall Park (25). Waddon Ponds (16). Walton Res (25); 256 on Jan 6th. Wimbledon Common (13).

In Lond: Battersea Park (21). Buckingham Palace (9), 63 on Mar 9th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 232 on Nov 18th. St James's Park, 108 on Nov 22nd.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Status: localised breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

As usual Oystercatchers could be found along the shores of the Thames to the east of London throughout the year, with a few individuals wandering as far up river as Tate Modern. Away from the Thames they were more regularly recorded between March and August, with the majority of records coming from the larger reservoirs and gravel pit complexes around the outskirts of the London Area. The highest numbers were reported from Crossness where there were regular double figure counts during the year, with a peak of 20 on Jan 17th. West Thurrock Marshes recorded a high of nine on Apr 19th, and Barking Bay and Rainham Marshes had peak counts of seven or eight. No other site reported more than five together.

This year, only one confirmed breeding pair was reported, but other pairs may have attempted to breed. Possible breeding records, and records from London boroughs are summarised:

Essex: Fairlop Waters, one on Apr 18th & 19th. KGV Res, singles on Mar 2nd and Apr 22nd.

Rainham Marshes, one pair seen with young. Walthamstow Res, up to two regularly between Apr and early Aug, including a pair seen mating, with five seen on July 1st. Also records from Thames-side sites throughout the year, as far up river as Barking Bay and Creekmouth.

Herts: Pairs summered at Amwell NR, Tyttenhanger GP, and in the Maple Cross area, and there were indications that breeding was attempted.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Apr 13th. Brent Res, singles on Apr 4th, May 17th & 21st, and Nov 19th. Tottenham Marshes, two flew over on May 28th. Also recorded from several Thames-side sites.

Kent: Recorded throughout the year at sites along the Thames, principally Crossness. Display noted at Swanscombe Marshes.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, two on May 22nd, one on July 11th. Dulwich Park, two flew over on May 13th. Holmethorpe SP, one on Apr 20th & 21st. London Wetland Centre, singles on May 21st, June 19th and Aug 27th, two on June 6th. QE II Res, singles May 23rd & 28th, July 13th, 24th, 25th, 28th & 30th, with three on 31st. Singles again Aug 13th & 27th. Tolworth, one flew over The Broadway at night on Oct 25th. Walton Res, one Mar 25th, Apr 20th, May 31st and Nov 19th.

In Lond: (all singles) Regent's Park, Apr 14th. Rotherhithe, Greenland Dock, Mar 12th, 13th & 16th. Southwark Park, Mar 5th & 9th. Tate Modern, one flying along the Thames on June 9th.

Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta

Status: scarce visitor in all months of the year; occasional breeder.

Avocets are now regular, but somewhat unpredictable, visitors to Thames-side sites at the east side of the London Area, where they can often be found feeding on the river foreshore. The largest flocks are usually seen at West Thurrock, and this year was no exception with four counts of 26 or more made during the year including a new London Area high count of 52 which was made on Jan 11th. Elsewhere they remain very scarce, with almost all records occurring during the spring and autumn passage periods, and generally involving only one or two individuals. During 2009 almost all records away from the Thames fell between Mar 1st and May 28th, with the exception of two at the London Wetland Centre in September. There were no reports of breeding activity this year. All records are given, or summarised below:

Essex: Rainham Marshes, recorded on 22 dates between Feb 25th and Dec 20th, with a peak of seven on Sep 20th & 21st. West Thurrock Marshes, seen in January, February, and December, with high counts of 45 on Jan 3rd, 52 on Jan 11th, 38 on Feb 13th, and 26 on Dec 18th.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, one on Mar 1st. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Apr 13th-14th.

Middx: Staines Res, one on Mar 3rd, six on May 15th. Brent Res, one on Apr 13th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Mar 19th.

Kent: Crossness, singles on Apr 11th & 20th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on May 28th, two on Sep 11th.

Little Ringed Plover Charadrius dubius

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first of the year was at Horton GP, on Mar 13th, with the last of the year at Q. Mother Res on Sep 10th. Most sites received their first birds during the last two weeks of March, with spring passage seemingly continuing through April and May, although as always the picture is confused by the presence, and movements, of breeding birds.

Again there were relatively few reports of confirmed breeding, or of birds seen mating

or in display, but regular presence was reported from several sites during May and June, suggesting that at least some of these may have been breeding. The table below gives the totals for these:

| Little Ringed Plover | Pairs confirmed breeding | Pairs probably breeding | Other pairs present | Total |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| Essex | 1 | 0 | 4 | 5 |
| Herts | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Middx | 1 | 4 | 2 | 7 |
| Bucks | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Kent | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Surrey | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 8 | 7 | 11 | 26 |

Autumn migrants were reported in July and August, with the number of reports dropping off rapidly towards the end of August, with a few lingering into September. There were no counts over eight during the year.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Status: localised breeder, common passage migrant, and winter visitor.

Like many wader species, the largest flocks in the London Area are invariably recorded along the Thames. All of the double figure flocks during 2009 were seen at sites on the Thames, mainly at Rainham and Crayford Marshes. Occasional records did come from elsewhere though, mainly during the spring and autumn passage periods when they were seen at sites throughout the area.

Two breeding attempts were confirmed but unfortunately there were no reports of success. Six other pairs showed signs that they may have tried to breed. Breeding records and reports from London boroughs are given or summarised below:

Essex: Fairlop Waters, one on Sep 9th. Ingrebourne Valley, two on Mar 26th. KGV Res, one on July 26th. Rainham Marshes, recorded in every month of the year apart from June and July, with peaks of 18 on Feb 23rd, 26 on May 13th, 42 on Sep 9th, and 39 on Dec 11th. Walthamstow Res, singles on Apr 14th and May 14th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one pair attempted to breed but hatched no young. Radlett Aero GP, display flight seen but no other indication of breeding. Tyttenhanger GP, present through the summer with display noted.

Middx: Brent Res, recorded on four dates in May with a peak of four on May 12th, singles in June and July. Staines Res, a pair seen with a juvenile at the end of June may have bred locally.

Bucks: Horton GP, one pair attempted to breed; six on May 13th and two on 30th were considered to have been of the race *tundrae* by the observer.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, several counts of 20+ made in the last four months of the year, with a peak of 28 on Oct 20th. Dartford Marshes, 28 on Jan 29th. Swanscombe Marshes, a pair may have bred. Also recorded in small numbers from various other sites on the Thames.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, recorded on 12 dates between Apr 11th and Oct 31st, with peaks of nine on May 13th and eight on Aug 7th. London Wetland Centre, up to

three on six dates between Mar 19th and Aug 26th; three on May 13th were considered to be of the *tundrae* race by the observer. Walton Res, two pairs appeared to be on breeding territories.

In Lond: Regent's Park, one flew west at 14:10 hrs on Apr 16th (ARD).

European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Status: regular winter visitor to parts of the area, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor elsewhere.

As usual most Golden Plover were found in the northern part of our area. Essex and Herts, each produced roughly 42% of all records during the year. In contrast, less than 5% came from Surrey and Kent combined. Flocks of up to 700 were reported from Herts, up to 250 from Essex, and up to 140 from Bucks. Most of these were in the outer parts of the area, but some fair sized flocks were recorded in the London boroughs in the Essex sector. Surrey and Kent had no records of more than eight.

This year the last birds of the spring were seen at Radlett Aero GP, where there were nine on Apr 21st, and the first returning individual was seen at Amwell NR on Aug 15th. Some quite large flocks were reported not long before the last spring record, with 100 at Chiswell Green on Apr 7th, and 70 in the Ingrebourne Valley on Apr 13th, perhaps lingering as late as possible to give any snow that may have been present on their breeding grounds time to clear.

High counts from each sector, and records from sites within Greater London are summarised below:

Essex: Dagenham Chase, 40 on Jan 1st, six on Dec 20th. Fairlop Waters, peak counts of 134 during the first winter period and 50 in the second. Ingrebourne Valley, peaks of 100 at the start of the year and 30 towards the end. Mollands Lane GPs, 35 on Jan 11th. Rainham Marshes, peaks of 250 in February and 194 in late Nov.

Herts: Flocks in excess of 200 were recorded at seven different sites, including peak counts of 700 from Cromerhyde Farm on Nov 8th, and Radlett Aero GP on Mar 23rd. Most of these sites regularly had three figure counts in both winter periods.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 25 seen on Dec 22nd was only the second record for the study area. Enfield Playing Fields, four on Jan 6th. Ferny Hill Farm, 11 on Jan 3rd, one on Jan 5th. KGV Res, three on Dec 23rd. Park Farm, Enfield, 45 on Jan 1st, 77 on Jan 3rd. Q. Mary Res, three on Dec 20th. Staines Res, singles on Feb 14th and Nov 20th, two on Dec 23rd. Stoke Newington Res, 80 over on Dec 23rd was the first record the observer knows about for the site. Theobalds Park, 40 on Mar 6th. Vicarage Farm, two on Sep 10th.

Bucks: Langley, 50 on Dec 27th. Q. Mother Res, flocks totalling 140 on Dec 21st and 100 on Dec 22nd.

Kent: Brasted, four on Feb 15th. Crayford Marshes, one on Oct 20th. R. Thames, Belvedere, four on Oct 29th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, four on Apr 13th, one on Nov 8th, and eight on three dates between Dec 22nd & 30th. Holmethorpe SP, one on Dec 28th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Jan 4th & 6th, and Dec 23rd.

In Lond: Regent's Park, four flew over early in the morning on Oct 17th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers, and scarce winter visitor.

There has been little change in the status of Grey Plovers in the London Area during recent years, with Thames-side sites in the Essex sector, continuing to give the best chance of encountering the species in the area. In winter they are rarely recorded away from the R. Thames, and this year was no exception. Numbers recorded from these sites each winter can be variable, but they are regularly recorded between November and mid-March each winter. During passage periods they can drop in where there is suitable habitat anywhere in the area. This year there was a reasonable spring passage, with up to 40 individuals reported from eight different sites between Apr 1st and May 15th, including a count of 21 at Rainham Marshes, but there were only four reports, totalling four birds, during the autumn.

All records are given or summarised below (singles unless stated):

Essex: Barking Riverside, May 14th. Rainham Marshes, recorded on seven dates Jan-Mar, with a peak of 15 on Jan 10th; up to four on seven dates between Apr 1st and May 15th, but with 21 on May 13th; one on Sep 21st, and up to eight on four dates in Dec. Walthamstow Res, May 13th. West Thurrock Marshes, up to four on five dates Jan-Feb, one on Dec 18th.

Herts: Amwell NR, two summer-plumaged birds, which flew off south in the evening on Aug 1st.

Middx: KGVI Res, one on Sep 17th.

Kent: Crossness, May 13th & 14th and Oct 27th. Dartford Marshes/R. Thames at Dartford, Jan 19th, five on Dec 29th. Sevenoaks WR, Apr 13th. Swanscombe Marshes, Jan 1st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, Apr 13th and May 13th. Holmethorpe SP, Apr 13th, first record for site. QE II Res, Apr 12th and May 14th. Walton Res, Apr 12th.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Status: widespread breeding species, common winter visitor and passage migrant.

There seems to be a slight bias towards the north and east of the London Area for this species with the larger flocks tending to be found in Kent, Herts, and particularly in Essex. Lapwing flocks can be seen in suitable habitat even within built up areas. Flocks can also often be seen passing overhead, sometimes as part of noticeable cold weather movements.

The 65 breeding pairs or territories reported, was another significant drop (87 in 2008, 145-152 in 2007). The population trend for Lapwing recorded by national BTO surveys shows a continued shallow decline, but lack of reporting is clearly making the situation in our area difficult to see clearly. For example reports of the presence or absence of breeding or territorial pairs were not received from many sites which had previously reported some of the highest breeding concentrations in the area. All observers are encouraged to submit details of breeding Lapwings to the relevant recorders.

The number of breeding pairs/territories reported, and some of the highest counts from each sector are given, including the highest counts from within London boroughs. Inner London records are given in full:

Essex: Just five breeding pairs reported, from five sites. Belhus Woods CP, a peak count of 240 on Feb 22nd. Ingrebourne Valley, a maximum of 300 on Oct 25th. Fairlop Waters, the highest count was 561 on Jan 24th. Rainham Marshes, over 1,000 on many dates with peaks during each winter period of 2,269 on Feb 22nd, and 1,335 on Dec 20th. West Thurrock Marshes, 1,000 on Feb 2nd.

Herts: At least 23 pairs/territories were reported from 11 different sites. Amwell NR, counts of several hundred on several dates, with a maximum of 550 on Feb 15th. Tyttenhanger GP, 500 on two dates in Jan, 610 on Jan 3rd.

Middx: 11 pairs/territories at eight sites. Dyrham Park, 250 on Jan 17th. Hampton FB, highs of 630 on Jan 30th, 563 on Feb 17th, and 450 on Dec 12th. Kempton NR, 250 on Jan 18th. Littleton, 300 on Jan 11th. Shepperton Green, 250 on Dec 20th. Staines Res, a peak count of 338 on Jan 18th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 450 on Jan 18th, Woodlands Park Lake, 500 on Feb 8th.

Kent: Just three pairs/territories were reported from three sites. Dartford Marshes, 450 on Dec 11th. R. Thames, Dartford, 700 on Jan 19th. Sevenoaks WR, peak counts in each winter period of 660 on Jan 25th and 408 on Dec 20th.

Surrey: 23 pairs/territories reported from eight sites. Beddington Farmlands, highs of 130 in Jan and Feb, and 181 on Dec 20th. London Wetland Centre, peaks at each end of the year of 141 on Feb 16th and 230 on Dec 23rd. Portsmouth Road FB, 200 on Jan 19th. Walton Res, 333 on Feb 14th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Oct 21st, two on Jan 11th, two young juvs near Serpentine on Aug 6th (in a crowded park). Regent's Park, three on Jan 5th & 7th, two juvs on July 30th, ten on Dec 18th, and 11 on 19th.

Knot Calidris canutus

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers.

With the exception of two records at Rainham Marshes in February, which may well have involved the same individual, all records could be classed as spring and autumn passage. There were nine spring records this year, all of singles, between Mar 10th and June 1st, and ten autumn records, of one or two individuals, between July 17th and Sep 19th. All records are given in full (singles unless stated):

Essex: Rainham Marshes, Feb 19th & 22nd, Mar 10th, Apr 11th, June 1st, Sep 15th, two on Sep 17th, and Sep 19th.

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, two on Sep 14th.

Middx: Brent Res, Mar 10th. Staines Res, Mar 23rd & 27th, Apr 16th, July 17th, two on July 18th, Aug 23rd, Sep 10th & 16th.

Kent: Crossness, May 30th and Sep 19th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, Apr 11th. Holmethorpe SP, May 15th, the first record here.

Sanderling Calidris alba

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers, rare in winter.

Like last year there were no records outside the spring and autumn passage periods. Spring passage this year was much lighter than during 2008, with counts suggesting that no more than 58 individuals passed through between May 9th and June 7th (half the total

for last spring). Almost half of these were at Rainham Marshes on May 13th. Autumn passage was recorded at very similar numbers to last year, with perhaps 23 seen between July 8th and Sep 20th. All records are given.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, two on May 12th, 26 on May 13th, two on July 15th, one on Aug 25th. Walthamstow Res, one on May 15th.

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, one on August 7th.

Middx: Brent Res, one on May 13th. KGVI Res, two on May 9th, one on May 22nd, two on May 23rd, 24th & 25th, which were judged by the observer to be different individuals on each day, one on July 25th. Staines Res, one on May 13th, two on July 19th, one on July 25th, one on Aug 29th, two on Sep 4th, and one on Sep 5th, and 20th.

Bucks: Horton GP, one on May 13th. Q. Mother Res, singles on May 13th, 14th & 23rd, two on May 26th, singles on July 11th and Aug 23rd.

Kent: Crossness, one on May 14th, eight on June 7th and two on Aug 13th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on May 13th. QE II Res, singles on May 15th & 21st, July 24th, two on July 31st, one on Aug 29th. Walton Res, two on Aug 15th.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Status: passage migrant in variable, but usually small numbers, rare in winter.

Another year with a typical showing, of at least eight individuals, this year including a winter record at the start of the year, one spring record, and at least five in the autumn, plus one in early November which is perhaps best treated as a late autumn migrant. All records below are singles, unless stated.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, June 3rd (RBs). Rainham Marshes, Feb 21st & 22nd (JA *et al*), Sep 16th & 17th (DSm, AT), and Nov 2nd (BBr).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, July 21st (MWd), two on Sep 10th (KEM, CDRH).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, Sep 14th and 16th-18th (JPA, KGu, MJS *et al*).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers, mainly in autumn.

With perhaps as few as four individuals recorded, and a maximum of seven, it was another poor year for this species.

Essex: Barking Riverside, two on May 14th (DC). Rainham Marshes, singles on May 14th-15th (AT *et al*) and May 31st (MJ).

Middx: Staines Res, single adults on Aug 3rd (PN) and Aug 5th (RWa *et al*).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Some very large flocks continue to be recorded from sites on the Thames, perhaps mainly when birds feeding just outside the LNHS area find safe roosting sites ahead of the incoming tide. This year a maximum of 3,000 were recorded at West Thurrock Marshes on Jan 3rd. Away from the Thames there were a few scattered records of small numbers of individuals during all months, but with increased frequency between mid-March and early June, and again from early July until mid-September.



*Even in late May waders bound for the Arctic tundra are still making their way through the region, by now typically in full breeding attire. This Sanderling *Calidris alba* was at Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir. (Dave Harris)*

An estimate of the numbers present during each month of the year is given in the table below, which gives the maximum count from each site during the month. During the passage periods of April to early June, and July to September, Dunlin can be more common at sites elsewhere in the area, rather than the sites on the Thames which are favoured in the winter.

| Dunlin | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----------|-------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| Thameside | 5,130 | 1,922 | 346 | 26 | 49 | 0 | 15 | 13 | 30 | 270 | 1,154 | 3,804 |
| Elsewhere | 11 | 6 | 13 | 34 | 42 | 7 | 28 | 43 | 20 | 24 | 9 | 6 |
| Total | 5,141 | 1,928 | 359 | 60 | 91 | 7 | 43 | 56 | 50 | 294 | 1,163 | 3,810 |

Records for each county are summarised, with the highest counts in each sector given, with emphasis given to records from sites within Greater London.

Essex: Maxima at the two main sites were: Rainham Marshes, 1,225 on Jan 15th, 1,204 on Dec 20th; West Thurrock Marshes, 3,000 on Jan 3rd, 2,000 on Jan 11th, 1,000 in the first days of Feb. Elsewhere there were records from sites including Barking Bay, Dagenham Chase, Fairlop Waters, KGV Res, Mayesbrook Park, and Walthamstow Res, mainly up to three, but with six at Walthamstow Res on July 24th.

Herts: Records of up to four came from sites in the Colne Valley and Lee Valley.



Dunlin Calidris alpina is the most likely calidrid wader to be encountered in London, pausing on passage at the reservoirs (here at Queen Elizabeth II) and occurring in numbers on the Thames. (Dave Harris)

Middx: Recorded from Brent Res, Hampton FB, Kempton NR, KGVI Res, Q. Mary Res, Staines Moor, and Staines Res. Most reports were of up to three individuals, but higher counts were at KGVI Res, with eight on Aug 22nd, and Staines Res, with 18 on Apr 17th.

Bucks: Small numbers recorded at Horton GP and Q. Mother Res, with a maximum of seven at Q. Mother Res on Aug 11th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, a high count of 500 on Dec 27th. Crossness, maxima at either end of the year of 700 on Feb 22nd and 300 in Nov & Dec. Dartford Marshes, 300 on Jan 18th, 800 on Dec 11th.

Surrey: Up to three were reported from Beddington Farmlands, London Wetland Centre, and Walton Res on various dates, with five at Beddington Farmlands on Apr 11th and May 13th, and six there on Oct 4th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one at the southern edge of Round Pond early in the morning on May 15th.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Status: regular passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

Over half of the records came from Rainham Marshes, with additional records during the early part of the year from nearby sites along the Thames, perhaps involving some of the same birds. There were also four seen feeding in a flooded field near Roydon on Jan 1st.

It is difficult to be sure how many passed through during the spring, but it was probably no more than 20 individuals, at four different sites, between Mar 14th and May 23rd.

Return passage seemed to start early, with a breeding-plumaged male at Dagenham Chase on June 25th. Ten sites produced records during the autumn, with the last of about 30 migrants seen at KGV Res on Sep 27th.

No more were seen in the London Area before mid-December.

Essex: Dagenham Chase, one on June 25th. KGV Res, one on Sep 27th. Rainham Marshes, up to three on 20 dates in Jan and Feb, one or two on 13 dates between Mar 15th and Apr 3rd, singles on May 23rd, June 26th, and Aug 11th, and then up to three on nine dates between Dec 16th and the end of the year. West Thurrock Marshes, one on Jan 18th.

Herts: Roydon, four on Jan 1st, Rye Meads RSPB, one on July 21st, one from Aug 21st - Sep 1st, with two on at least Aug 26th.

Middx: Brent Res, one on July 2nd, two on Aug 18th, two on Aug 23rd, one on Aug 31st. Q. Mary Res, one on Sep 16th. Staines Res, two on July 17th, five on Aug 9th, one on Aug 15th, four on Sep 16th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, two flew over on Aug 9th, and three flew over on Dec 20th.

Kent: Crossness, one on Jan 11th, and two on Dec 27th. Dartford Marshes, one on Jan 30th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Apr 11th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Apr 15th & 16th and Sep 16th. Walton Res, one on Mar 14th.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Status: widespread but elusive winter visitor and passage migrant.

As always, the secretive nature of this species means that it is very difficult to accurately assess how many visit the London Area, and it is very likely that many are overlooked. This year records came from 30 sites, seemingly with a slight peak during January. The table below shows the monthly maxima for all sites:

| Jack Snipe | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May-Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|-----|
| | 23 | 19 | 14 | 7 | 0 | 17 | 14 | 14 |

The final record of the spring came from Horton GP on Apr 20th, with the first returning birds of the autumn not recorded until Oct 2nd. All records are given or summarised below (with the maximum in each winter period given for many sites).

Essex: Fairlop Waters (1:2). Rainham Marshes (3:2). Walthamstow Res, singles on Jan 5th & 9th. Waterworks NR, one on Mar 16th. West Thurrock Marshes (3:0).

Herts: Amwell NR (1:0). Park Street, one on Feb 15th. Rye Meads RSPB (2:2). Tyttenhanger GP (2:1).

Middx: Brent Res (1:2). Horsenden Hill, one on Oct 29th. Kempton NR, up to two during Oct. KGV Res, one on Apr 11th. Staines Moor (1:2). Stoke Newington Res (1:2). Tottenham Marshes, one on Jan 9th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, two on Dec 25th. Holmethorpe SP (6:2). Horton GP (2:1), although the only reports at the end of the year were in Oct. Q. Mother Res, one on Jan 8th.

Kent: Crossness, singles on Jan 9th & 10th and Apr 11th. Dartford Marshes (1:1). Sutcliffe Park, two on Dec 20th, one on Dec 22nd. Sutton at Hone, one on Jan 7th. Swanscombe Marshes, three on Feb 26th, one on Mar 30th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (3:2). Hershams GP, one on Feb 8th. Horton CP, one on Feb 18th. London Wetland Centre (4:7). Thorpe Water Park, one on Mar 28th.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Status: common winter visitor and passage migrant, former scarce breeder.

Higher counts at prime locations in the first winter period could be cold-weather influxes into the area. In the first three months of the year 24 sites had counts of over ten, 15 had counts of over 25. There were three-figure maxima at three sites: Rainham had 150 on Feb 22nd, Rye Meads had 118 on Mar 14th and Stanwell Moor had 115 on Feb 14th. Heavy snowfall and freezing temperatures on the night of Feb 6/7th boosted numbers at some locations. For example, the total of 53 at Brent Res on 7th was a site record, and there were 39 at Hershams GP on 8th. Numbers dropped sharply after the third week of March, although there were still 37 at Rainham on Apr 17th.

There was no evidence of breeding but a bird was observed performing a drumming display at Kempton NR on Apr 21st. Small numbers were seen during the summer months: at three sites in June, and on seven dates at London Wetland Centre; at three sites in July.

Numbers started to build in August and there was a new influx in mid-December as temperatures plunged and snow fell. The only three-figure count was at Rainham: 119 on Dec 20th but Brent Res had a new record count of 54 on Dec 28th. In the second winter period 16 sites had counts of over ten, four over 25.

High counts in each sector are given below, along with all Inner London records.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, 27 on Mar 5th. Fairlop Waters, 25 on Jan 24th. Rainham Marshes, 150 on Feb 22nd and 119 on Dec 20th. Waterworks NR, 25 on Mar 16th.

Herts: Amwell, 40 on Feb 21st. Panshanger Park, 24 on Sep 27th. Rye Meads RSPB, 118 on Mar 14th. Tyttenhanger GP, 24 on Feb 11th and 34 on Mar 14th.

Middx: Brent Res, 53 on Feb 7th and 54 on Dec 28th. Stanwell Moor, 54 on Jan 31st, 115 (in two areas) on Feb 14th, 63 on Mar 21st and 59 on Dec 13th.

Kent: Crossness, 25 on Mar 1st. Sevenoaks WR, 80 on Feb 17th and 25 on Dec 19th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 26 on Feb 14th and 18 on Dec 26th. Hershams GP, 39 on Feb 8th. Holmethorpe SP, 45 on Jan 1st. London Wetland Centre, 48 on Jan 11th and 32 on Oct 11th. Thorpe Park, 44 on Mar 14th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Jan 2nd, singles Jan 14th, Mar 11th, Nov 3rd and Dec 28th.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Status: localised breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the early part of the year, to Apr 17th, birds were reported from 46 locations, an increase on the previous year. Several were seen in Inner London, including one picked up exhausted at an Old Street bus stop on Mar 15th. The biggest count was of eight in Blackfan Wood area on Jan 18th while the most consistent sites were the London Wetland Centre, Hilfield Park Res, Trent Park and Bedfords Park.

During the breeding season birds were seen at just four locations and the total of up to nine roding birds from just three sites was down (12 in 2010). Roding was observed between May 9th and July 7th. Breeding was not confirmed anywhere.

From Sep 26th the species was seen at an impressive 53 sites, the biggest count being four at Woodside, on Dec 13th. Several were picked up exhausted, including one in a Stoke Newington garden on Nov 16th; after four hours, having presumably regained some strength, it flew off. The most consistent sites were the London Wetland Centre, Wanstead Flats and Hilfield Park Res.

Best counts, records from the breeding season (roding birds in parenthesis) and Inner London records are listed.

Essex: Nine sites early year, one during the breeding season (2-4, Long Running) and 19 late year.

Herts: Nineteen sites early year, one during the breeding season (1, Broxbourne Woods) and 16 late year.

Middx: Eleven sites early year and four late year.

Kent: Four sites early year, one in July and two late year.

Surrey: Eight sites early year, one in the breeding season (4, Prince's Coverts) and six late year.

In Lond: Five sites early year and four late year.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor in variable, but increasing, numbers.

Wintering numbers along the Thames were high in the first winter, a little lower later in the year. The biggest total was 450 at Rainham on Jan 26th. Away from the Thames,

This Woodcock Scolopax rusticola was picked up exhausted in Old Street in March. After seeming to improve it was released in Alexandra Park, but unfortunately it did not survive. (Dominic Mitchell)



records were confined to passage periods. Spring passage was early, running from Mar 19th to Apr 15th and involved just 16 birds away from Rainham, where there were 20 on Apr 28th. Autumn passage was heavier and ran over a longer period, from July 4th to Oct 17th. There were several arrivals, with 49 at Staines Res on the evening of July 8th noteworthy. First, 21 arrived from the south, toured the basins then flew off to the south-east; some time later 28 flew in from the north then headed off south. The peak count late year was 280 at Rainham on Nov 16th. Monthly maxima at key sites along the Thames are shown in the table below, with counts of five or more from other locations, and all Inner London records, listed in the notes.

| Black-tailed Godwit | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | Dagenham Riverside | 246 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Rainham Marshes | 450 | 300 | 5 | 20 | 3 | 26 | 11 | 36 | 64 | 39 | 280 | 267 |
| Kent | Crossness | 135 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 7 | 18 | 31 | 83 | 228 | 110 |
| | Swanscombe Marshes | 18 | 13 | - | - | 2 | - | - | 27 | - | 2 | 2 | - |

Essex: Dagenham Chase, five Aug 12th. Ingrebourne Valley, 20 Aug 11th. Walthamstow Res, 22 on Aug 9th. West Thurrock Marshes, 27 in Dec, 14 in Jan.

Herts: Amwell NR, 13 on Aug 11th. Tyttenhanger GP, five on July 10th.

Middx: Staines Res, 49 on July 8th, five on July 23rd & 24th, and seven on Aug 2nd. Staines Moor, 22 over on March 16th and eight flew NE on Aug 22nd.

Kent: Greenhithe, 49 in Jan. Littlebrook GP, 118 on Jan 19th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, five on Aug 10th & 12th and eight on Oct 2nd. London Wetland Centre, five on Mar 30th and Apr 11th.

In Lond: Westminster, one that flew up river on July 15th was the first record for Inner London (ASMS).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers, scarce in winter.

Spring passage was better this year, involving at least 30 birds at six sites. An early bird was at Walton Res on Mar 21st but passage was mostly concentrated between Apr 17th and May 31st, very typical dates. Rainham had the majority of birds, including the only double-figure count. Autumn passage was almost non-existent, involving just two birds, both at Crossness. In winter, presumably the same bird was at Rainham and Dartford Marshes on Dec 29th.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, four on Apr 17th, one to three between 18th-27th, 12 on May 13th with two still present on 15th, three on 31st, then one on Dec 29th.

Herts: Amwell, one on Apr 25th-26th.

Middx: Staines Res, one Apr 24th, four on 25th, two on May 2nd and one on 23rd.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, singles on May 13th & 17th.

Kent: Crossness, one on Apr 26th, two on May 25th, singles on July 18th and Aug 2nd. Dartford Marshes, one on Dec 29th.

Surrey: Walton Res, singles on Mar 21st and Apr 25th.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Status: regular passage migrant.

Spring passage was concentrated between Apr 8th and May 18th, involving at least 118 birds (75 on spring passage in 2008) at 15 sites, with Rainham attracting at least 42, including 23 on Apr 9th. The next best location was Q. Mother Res, with birds on nine dates, including ten that arrived from the north-east on May 16th. At least 17 were recorded at Beddington Farmlands, including 14 on Apr 17th. Autumn passage was between June 24th and Aug 27th. It was almost as good as the spring, with at least 103 birds (cf. 26 in 2008) at ten locations. Unusually, the lion's share of birds was in west London, with 16 at Q. Mother Res representing 'the best autumn passage for many years' and at least 56 at Staines Res including 25 SW on July 29th and 20 SSW Aug 4th.

Counts of five or more are listed at the main sites, with records at other sites summarised.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, 23 on Apr 9th, 20 on 10th, six on 17th, five on 22nd, seven on 25th, seven on May 5th & 6th and ten on May 12th; in autumn, six on July 23rd and Aug 4th and seven on Aug 9th. Walthamstow Res, three on July 19th. Singles at Fairlop Waters on Apr 23rd and West Thurrock Marshes on Apr 19th.

Herts: Amwell NR, four on Aug 1st. Singles at Bedmond on May 4th, Hilfield Park Res on May 16th, Stocker's Farm on Apr 26th and Tyttenhanger GP on Apr 24th and May 1st.

Middx: Kentish Town, one west over Arctic Street on Aug 15th. KGV Res, one on Aug 1st. Staines Res, 25 on July 29th and 20 on Aug 4th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, six Apr 18th, ten May 16th, five Aug 1st, seven Aug 7th.

Kent: Crossness, 11 on Apr 18th. Dartford Marshes, one on July 14th & 16th. Swanscombe Marshes, eight on Aug 9th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, five Apr 14th, 14 on 17th. London Wetland Centre, seven on May 15th. QE II Res, one on Apr 17th. Walton Res, two on Apr 23rd.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Status: winter visitor and passage migrant.

Counts at sites on the lower Thames early in the year were slightly down on 2008, with double-figure maxima from just two sites. The peaks were both in March, with 36 at West Thurrock Marshes on 8th and 37 at Rainham Marshes on 31st. There were reports from ten other locations in the early year. Numbers fell sharply in the first week of April. Spring passage was very light, with single birds only seen at half a dozen sites away from the river. Autumn passage was only slightly more marked, with single birds overflying Staines Res on four dates in July, a single over Wimbledon Common on July 19th and six over Regent's Park on July 30th. At Q. Mother Res 15 flew over on Sep 9th. In the second winter period numbers at Rainham built up in November, but nowhere else had a count greater than three.

| Curlew | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Rainham | 24 | 17 | 37 | 31 | 6 | 6 | 24 | 22 |
| West Thurrock | 7 | 4 | 36 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Other counts of more than two are given below.

Midxx: KGV Res, three on June 14th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 15 on Sep 9th.

Kent: Crossness, three on Oct 28th and Nov 21st.

In Lond: Regent's Park, six on July 30th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Status: common passage migrant and localised winter visitor.

There was a good spread of birds in the first winter period with records from an impressive selection of sites, some far from the Thames. However no count exceeded three birds.

Spring passage took off in mid-April. Daily totals are shown in the chart below, which shows that the peak concentration of about 30 birds was from May 13-15th. There were seven at Brent Res on 13th and ten at Beddington Farmlands on 15th. Spring passage dropped off after this and the last birds were on June 7th.

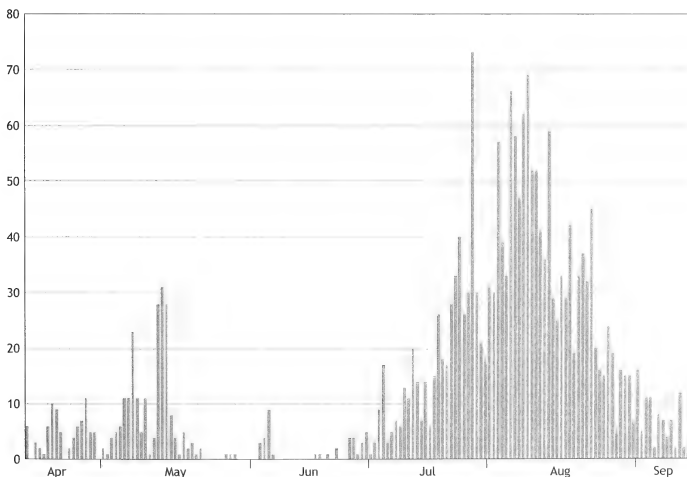
Autumn passage began on June 19th but picked up pace in mid-July. There were 73 on 26th, including 26 at KGV Res; and 69, including the year's biggest count of 27, at Crossness on Aug 8th. Numbers dropped quickly in September.

During the second winter period there were records from 22 locations. These were all ones and twos.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one Apr 22nd, May 14th & 15th. Regent's Park, one May 14th. Rotherhithe, one Apr 11th. R. Thames, Vauxhall, one May 13th, two July 25th, one Aug 1st & 10th.

Common Sandpiper

Daily totals, 2009





Whimbrels *Numenius phaeopus* pass through London in some numbers on passage, most flying directly over. This migrant, however, rested up alongside Mallards at Walton Reservoirs on 23 April. (Dave Harris)

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Status: widespread winter visitor and passage migrant (mainly in autumn).

A good year. Present at many sites in both winter periods, spring passage was strong and autumn passage even more so. Monthly peak counts exceeded those of 2008 in every month except October. The importance of Beddington Farmlands was especially marked, with double-figure maxima in every month apart from May.

Noted at 45 sites in the first three months of the year; spring passage was from mid-March, peaking on Mar 21st when there were 27 birds in the area, 15 at Beddington. There was also one record on May 15th in Inner London, on a flooded garage roof and then on a children's play area at Paddington Green.

Autumn passage was prolonged, from mid-June to late September. There were double-figure counts at Beddington almost throughout this period and also at William Girling Res on several dates. The highest was on Aug 22nd, with 54 in London (36 at Beddington). In the last three months of the year there were sightings at 36 sites and ten were still present at Beddington on Dec 6th.

The following lists the monthly maxima at the most important site, Beddington.

| Green Sandpiper | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June | July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 11 | 11 | 15 | 9 | 0 | 24 | 42 | 36 | 20 | 11 | 11 | 10 |

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Status: scarce passage migrant.

Even fewer records than usual, just three (six or seven in 2008 and eight or nine in 2007). There were no spring records and all those on autumn passage were in the four-day period Aug 23rd-26th.

Essex: Holyfield Marsh, one on Aug 23rd (GW). Rainham Marshes, one on Aug 26th (HV, SSy).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one Aug 23rd (FP).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Status: common passage migrant, rare in winter.

In the first winter period there were singles at Walton Res from Feb 13th-27th. Spring passage was between Mar 20th and June 8th. There was a significant arrival on Apr 25th-26th: apart from a flock of 35 at Rainham Marshes, there were birds at five other sites in that two-day period. Autumn passage started on June 26th and peaked at ten at Crayford Marshes on Sep 11th. The last bird of autumn was at Warren Gorge on Oct 25th.

Essex: Fairlop Waters, one on Mar 20th-21st. Rainham Marshes, seen on 24 dates between Apr 12th and June 14th, with a peak of 35 on Apr 26th; this was the biggest flock seen in the LNHS area for some while. In autumn, seen on 32 dates between June 26th and Oct 15th, with a max count of nine on Aug 6th. Walthamstow Res, one on Apr 7th and two on Aug 11th.

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, three on Aug 29th.

Middx: Brent Res, two on May 3rd, singles on June 4th, July 2nd & 13th and three on Aug 18th. Kempton NR, seven on Aug 15th and three on Sep 9th. KGVI Res, singles on Apr 26th and May 10th, then up to eight in the period Aug 22nd to Sep 8th. Staines Moor, five on Aug 16th. Staines Res, singles on Apr 26th, May 10th, June 2nd & 28th, Aug 4th and Sep 16th, with seven on Aug 13th-14th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, one on Apr 19th, seven on Aug 12th, five on Sep 1st and ten on Sep 11th. Crossness, one on Apr 20th. Dartford Marshes, six on Sep 12th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, seen on five dates between Apr 18th and June 2nd, with two on the last date. Then, on eight dates between July 1st and Sep 1st, with a peak count of seven on July 12th. London Wetland Centre, singles on May 26th and June 2nd, three on July 3rd, singles on July 27th and Sep 26th.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Status: uncommon passage migrant.

In spring there were four records, involving five birds, a typical number for recent years. Passage started one day earlier than in 2008, on Apr 26th and ran until June 1st. Autumn passage was above average, involving 17 birds, and was concentrated between Aug 1st and Sep 16th though there were two earlier birds at the end of June. Several sites had multiple counts, the best record being four at Beddington Farmlands on Aug 24th.

Essex: Dagenham Chase, two on Aug 25th. Rainham Marshes, one on June 1st and three on Aug 1st. Wanstead Flats, one on Aug 11th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on May 4th. Rye Meads RSPB, one from June 27th-29th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on June 29th.

Middx: Brent Res, two on May 5th and one on Aug 1st.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one on Apr 26th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on May 5th, one or more Aug 14th to Sep 16th, peaking at four on Aug 24th. London Wetland Centre, two on Aug 1st.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Status: common winter visitor and passage migrant, localised breeder.

In the first winter period the biggest count was 400 at West Thurrock Marshes. The highest total in the second winter period was 340 at Crossness.

Breeding was disappointing with 11 breeding pairs reported, and just two chicks known to have fledged. This compares with 17 breeding pairs and eight young fledged in 2008. No breeding birds were reported from Rainham again. The highest counts for sites along the Lower Thames are listed in the table below.

| Redshank | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|----------|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | Creekmouth, Barking | - | 52 | 4 | - | - | 16 | 138 | 144 |
| | Rainham Marshes | 254 | 300 | 195 | 84 | 53 | 139 | 172 | 121 |
| | West Thurrock Marshes | 400 | 200 | 150 | - | - | - | - | 200 |
| Kent | Crossness | 60 | 135 | 115 | 57 | 160 | 340 | 190 | 220 |
| | Crayford Marshes | - | - | - | - | 35 | 50 | 68 | 60 |

Sites with counts of five or more birds (maximum in brackets) and breeding records are listed below.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, ten in Mar; Bow Creek, 12 in Jan; Fairlop Waters, five in Mar; Thames Barrier, ten in Jan.

Herts: Amwell NR, eight in Apr; Radlett Aero GP, six in Mar; Tyttenhanger GP (1), 12 in Apr; Willow Farm (1).

Middx: Kempton NR (1), six in Mar and Apr; Staines Res, 12 in Mar; Stanwell Moor (1).

Bucks: Horton GP (1).

Kent: Dartford Marshes, 39 in Jan; Greenhithe, 22 in Jan; River Darent, Dartford, 250 in Jan; Swanscombe Marshes, 12 in Feb.

Surrey: Island Barn Res, six in Jan, Feb and Nov; London Wetland Centre (1), 16 in Apr; Walton Res (4), 11 in Mar.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Status: passage migrant and localised winter visitor.

The first and second winter periods were both very disappointing, involving just a single bird. Spring passage involved 25 birds at ten sites. It started with one on Apr 17th and continued to June 7th. During that period the highest single count was seven at Rainham Marshes, the best site in spring. The first bird of autumn passage (which involved at least 23 birds at six sites) was one on June 27th and the last one on Sep 10th. As in 2008, Staines Res was the best site in autumn: the peak was five on July 28th.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, seven on May 13th, two on May 14th-15th, one on July 18th, two on Aug 6th, one on Aug 23rd and one on Dec 29th. West Thurrock Marshes, one on Mar 8th.

Middx: KGV Res, one on May 9th, three on June 7th, one on July 31st and two on Aug 2nd. Staines Res, one on Apr 17th, three on May 10th, one on May 15th, up to five in period July 23rd - Aug 1st, and up to three in period Aug 9th-16th.

Bucks: Horton GP, one on May 7th. Q. Mother Res, singles on May 23rd, Aug 21st and Sep 10th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, three on May 27th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on May 13th. London Wetland Centre, one on May 23rd. QE II Res, singles on May 29th and June 27th, two on July 20th and one on July 28th-29th. Walton Res, one on May 23rd.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Status: rare visitor, normally in late autumn and winter.

Just one record (four in 2008), a bird that arrived during a period of gales in the western parts of the UK. Spring records are unusual in London.

Essex: KGV Res, one from Mar 6th-8th (HLY, MSd).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Status: regular but scarce autumn migrant; rare in other seasons.

Only a single record, compared to over a dozen last year. (Although most of those records probably involved just one bird in the Rainham Marshes area.)

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one seen distantly on Aug 25th (MMe).

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Status: rare autumn migrant.

A single record representing the 18th record for London.

Middx: KGV Res, intermediate-phase juvenile first seen at c09:25 on Sep 20th close to SW corner. After circling the reservoir, it then drifted SW over Staines town where it circled around, until it was lost from sight at 09.45 (AVM, PN).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Status: regular but scarce migrant.

Three records, the same number as 2008, and representing an average for the species, although two records relate to the same bird.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Dec 29th remaining until Jan 1st (HV *et al*).

Herts: Amwell NR, single bird on Oct 25th (BR).

Kent: Dartford Marshes, same bird as the Rainham one seen on Dec 31st (PRo).

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

Status: rare autumn vagrant.

First records for two years, with what was presumably the same bird recorded on both sides of the Thames.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, juvenile, upriver at 14:32 on Oct 7th (AT *et al*).

Kent: Crossness, juvenile from E at 14:50, flew W at 15:00 on Oct 7th (JKA).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Status: regular, but scarce, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Overall a fairly lean year for sightings, with only about 27 individuals being recorded (54 in 2008). Staines had the highest number of records, with four of at least six birds. Apart from four instances, all records were of single birds.

Winter saw three records, all singles, namely Ruxley on Jan 25th, London Wetland Centre on Feb 6th and Amwell NR, adult on Feb 19th.

Spring proved to be the most productive period with 13 records from March to May. Brent Res on Mar 9th; Rainham Marshes on Mar 15th; Q. Mother Res on Mar 22nd; Hilfield Park Res on Mar 25th; Q. Mother Res on Mar 27th; Staines Res on Apr 11th, with four on May 5th and still three remaining on May 6th; Rotherhithe, two off Greenland Pier on May 16th; Crossness on May 16th & 17th; Limehouse Reach on May 21st and Q. Mother Res on May 24th.

The summer period saw only one record of a singleton at Staines Res on June 12th. The next record came on Sep 7th at Beddington Farmlands, followed by a juvenile bird on Sep 14th at Crossness, and almost certainly, the same bird at Greenhithe on the same day. There were two more records before the end of the year, London Wetland Centre, on Nov 29th and Rainham Marshes on Dec 29th.

Although down on last year's total of 54 individuals, the pattern of occurrence is similar, with the March to May period producing the most sightings. There were slightly less records during both the winter periods of 2009 compared to 2008.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Status: very common winter visitor and passage migrant, occasional breeder.

The Staines Res breeding colony numbered c160 pairs, a large increase over last year's 102, with c120 nests on the new raft, along with 23 and 16 pairs nesting on the old raft. The increase was due to birds using the new raft. About 90 young were fledged. In Herts, eight pairs attempted breeding at Rye Meads RSPB, as well as one pair at Seventy Acres Lake. Elsewhere in Middx, one pair attempted breeding on KGVI Res but the nest was washed away. In Surrey there were three nesting pairs at Walton Res. It would seem only the Staines Res birds were successful. Counts of over 1,000 came from 15 sites, the same as last year. It is hard to make comparisons, as counts, in some cases, came from different sites and were generally made at different times. However, taking Beddington as a barometer, overall the totals were about 20% higher, except for February, which was about 20% down. Counts at Rainham were consistent for January and February, but 60% down for November. Notwithstanding, these counts are snapshots; given another day, the data may have given a different picture.

Counts of over 2,000 came from six sites (with combined maxima of c35,200 individuals), compared to ten sites in 2008 (c43,500), five sites in 2007 (c38,800), 13 sites in 1999 (c79,300) and eight sites in 1989 (c56,000). In the summary below, peak counts of 1,000 or more are given. For Inner London, there was a count of over 2,000 at Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns on Feb 23rd.

Essex: Grays, c1,500 Feb 25th. Rainham Marshes, c6,000 Jan 30th and Feb 9th, c4,000 Mar 6th, c2,000 Nov 12th & 20th. William Girling Res, c9,500 Dec 5th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 1,400 Nov 6th, 1,134 Nov 11th, 2,500 Nov 14th and 2,400 Dec 14th. Hilfield Park Res, c5,000 Feb 7th, c1,000 Aug 15th and c5,000 Sep 18th. Rye Meads RSPB, 1,020 Oct 13th.

Middx: Staines Res, c2,000 Mar 30th and Apr 2nd. Stoke Newington Res 1,740+ Jan 19th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, c1,000 on June 28th.

Kent: Crossness, c1,000 Aug 9th. Dartford c1,000 June 16th. Swanscombe Marshes, c1,100 Feb 7th.

Surrey: Beddington, 10,160 Jan 1st, 4,959 Feb 1st, c6,300 Feb 28th, 3,975 Mar 1st, 7,380 Oct 1st, and 6,482 Dec 1st. Holmethorpe SP, 4,000 Jan 18th. Temple Road, Epsom, c1,000 flying over Sep 4th and Nov 4th.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Status: regular passage migrant, occasional in summer and winter.

Only three records at the beginning of the year, one at Q. Mother Res on Jan 20th, two birds at Staines Res on Feb 15th and one at Kensington Gdns on Feb 28th. There were 11 records for March across ten dates, from four sites; these being, Rainham Marshes, Staines Res, Island Barn Res and Walton Res. As was the case in previous years, Staines Res had the majority of sightings, with six. The maximum counts were ten at Staines on Mar 20th and seven at Walton Res on Mar 18th. When compared to 2008, the first three months appear similar in the number of records to 2009.

April produced 40% of the year's sightings, with 44 records, across 24 dates, from 12 sites. The sites were: Q. Mother Res, KGV Res, Rainham Marshes, Aldenham Res, Hilfield Park Res, Rye Meads RSPB, Brent Res, Staines Res, Stoke Newington Res, Beddington Farmlands, Island Barn Res and London Wetland Centre. Again, Staines Res accounted for the majority of records, and the highest count of 51 birds on Apr 20th.

May only saw ten records (well down on last year's 39), across nine dates, from three sites: Horton GP, Rainham Marshes and Staines Res. June, July and August had a combined total of seven records.

There were ten records during September, compared to 19 in 2008. These were recorded over nine dates, from five sites: Q. Mother Res, Rainham Marshes, Crossness, Staines Res and London Wetland Centre, with a high count of only five. October and November had six records, with a high count of only six birds at two sites. Of note were records of a single bird at Kensington Gardens on Feb 28th and Oct 29th, the first for five years.

December saw 11 records, over seven dates, from eight sites: Beddington Farmlands, Crossness, KGV Res, Q. Mother Res, Rainham Marshes, R. Thames at Belvedere, Staines Res and Stanwell Moor. The maximum count was 27 at Beddington Farmlands, on Dec 30th. This marked a better winter period than last year, with only six records in 2008 during the period October to December.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Status: regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

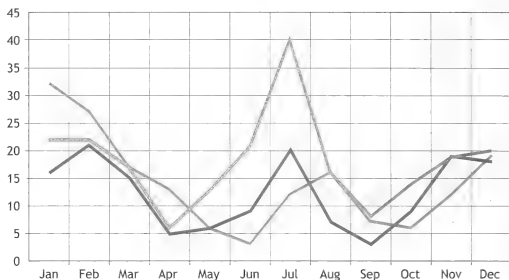
Mediterranean Gulls were at 19 sites during January, with at least 22 individuals involved, but no more than two at any site. During February, 22 individuals again at 16 sites, the highest count being four at Beddington Farmlands on the 16th. March saw at least 17 birds from 13 sites, with a maximum of three at Beddington on the 5th.

Mediterranean Gull

Monthly totals of minimum number recorded each month for last three years

Key

— 2007
— 2008
— 2009



Monthly totals of the minimum number of Mediterranean Gulls recorded each month for the last three years.

Birds were reported from only four sites during April involving at least six individuals. May saw a small pick up with 13 birds being seen at nine sites, with a high count of three at Crossness. June saw another slight rise with 21 birds seen at 11 sites, with a high count of four at Q. Mother Res on the 15th. At least 40 individuals were present in July across 16 sites. The high counts were of nine birds at Greenwich on the 20th and five at Beddington on the 21st. Sightings were down during August, with 16 birds being seen at nine sites, the highest count was three at Q. Mother Res on the 16th. Sightings fell away again during September, with eight birds being seen at only seven sites.

Eight sites reported birds in October involving at least 14 individuals, with a maximum count of three at Hilfield Park Res on the 17th. November saw a slight increase with records coming from 13 sites. At least 19 birds were seen, with no more than two being seen at any site during the month. In December 20 birds were seen at 14 sites.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, the usual German-ringed bird from Jan to Mar 11th. A different bird on Nov 11th, 14th, 29th & 30th, Dec 1st & 14th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 14th. St James's Park, a 1st-winter from Nov 2nd to end of year, which was quite tame and came to bread.

The graph above shows the monthly totals of the minimum number of birds recorded each month for the last three years. The data takes into account the ages of birds recorded at their respective sites, but not the possibility of individuals turning up at more than one site.

Overall, more birds were recorded in 2009 than in the previous two years. The general pattern of the three graph lines is similar, showing wintering birds, which move off early spring and returning adults and juvenile birds moving through during summer and then another influx of winter arrivals.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Status: common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Counts of 100+ came from 23 sites (with combined maxima of c8,840), which is much higher than last year (15 sites and c3,892). However, there were similar counts in 1999 (20 sites

and c8,350). Of the counts recorded in 2009, only three were over 500 and one over 1,000; this is better than last year with only one count over 500 and one of c1,000. Some of the higher counts are given below, along with counts of ten or more in Inner London.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, c500 on Feb 6th. Wanstead Flats and Park 484 on Jan 13th, c400 on Nov 20th & 29th and 387 on Dec 20th. William Girling Res, c3,200 on Dec 5th.

Herts: Amwell NR, c600 on Jan 25th, c350 on Feb 13th. Hilfield Park Res, c500 on Feb 7th.

Middx: Brent Res, c200 on Jan 31st, 303 on Feb 1st, and 825 on Dec 5th. Horsenden Hill, 360 on Jan 25th. Lake Farm CP, 282 on Mar 9th, 202 during Nov and 263 during Dec.

Kent: Eynsford, 166 on Jan 31st. Sevenoaks WR, 120 on Jan 7th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, 238 on Jan 19th, 200 on Feb 21st. Walton Res, 260 on Dec 1st.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 177 on Jan 11th, 179 on Feb 2nd, 71 on Mar 11th, 40 on Oct 25th, 67 on Nov 17th and 83 on Dec 26th.

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*

Status: rare visitor.

Only three records this year, probably all the regular Isle of Dogs bird.

Middx: Isle of Dogs, usual returning adult, reported on Jan 1st and Aug 17th (SHn).

Kent: Greenwich, adult on Aug 22nd (SD).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Status: common, most regular in autumn and winter; breeds in small but increasing numbers.

Compared to last year's three breeding records, this year's ten would appear to be a large increase. However, breeding is greatly under-recorded. From the presence of adult Lesser Black-backed Gulls in much of urban London throughout the breeding season, there are clearly many birds attempting to breed in London. Since this seems to be happening on London's roofs, it is very much under-recorded. One of 2008's records was of a colony of about 40 pairs at Highams Park Industrial Estate, Chingford, which has not been recorded this year, and the colony at Walthamstow Res was not recorded last year but was in the 2007 report.

Counts of 100+ are down from 29 last year to 22 this year, and still further down on the 37 counts from 2007. Counts of 300+ came from three sites (with combined maxima of c3,000 individuals), compared to four sites in 2008 (c2,450), five sites in 2007 (c4,350), seven sites in 1999 (c4,700) and four sites in 1989 (c3,650). All proved or probable breeding records are shown below, as well as high counts.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, c2,000 on Feb 9th and c500 on Nov 12th. Walthamstow Res, at least 28 young fledged.

Herts: Confirmed breeding at Borehamwood (1) and Watford (3), with possible breeding at three other sites. Amwell NR, 170 on Jan 1st, 195 on Feb 7th, 140 on Feb 19th, 420 on Sep 17th, 355 on Oct 3rd, 560 on Oct 8th, 418 on Nov 11th, and c600 on Nov 14th. Hilfield Park Res, 300+ on Mar 20th, 200+ on Aug 31st and 421 on Sep 9th. Rye Meads RSPB, 108 on Feb 7th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, usual pair bred nearby. Brent Res, two pairs bred. Horsenden Hill, one pair bred.



Mediterranean Gull Larus melanocephalus is a good find any time in Inner London, but this smart juvenile at Rotherhithe for a week in the second half of July was a noteworthy early appearance. (Richard Bonser)

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, monthly maxima: 162 Jan, 178 Feb, 229 Mar, 110 Aug, 450 Oct, 169 Dec. Portsmouth Rd FB, c200 on Sep 12th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/ Kensington Gdns, pair seen mating. Oval Road and Gloucester Crescent NW1, three pairs each fledging at least one bird.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Status: common, most regular in winter; breeds in small numbers.

As with Lesser Black-backed Gull, from the presence of adult Herring Gulls in much of urban London throughout the breeding season, there are clearly many birds attempting to breed. Since this seems to be happening on London's roofs, it is very much under-recorded. More watching from office windows is needed! About 22-27 pairs were reported as nesting this year, although this is a great under-estimate.

Counts of 200+ are down from 33 last year to 25 this year, but comparable to the 27 counts from 2007. Counts of 300+ came from eight sites (with combined maxima of c13,100 individuals), compared to 12 sites in 2008 (c13,100), six sites in 2007 (c9,950), eight sites in 1999 (c4,100) and three sites in 1989 (c5,800).

Listed below are confirmed and probable breeding records, and some large counts.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, c2,000 on Jan 30th, c2,500 on Feb 9th, c700 on June 22nd, c200 on Nov 12th. Walthamstow Res, one pair bred.

Herts: Amwell NR, c650 on Jan 25th, 390 on Nov 22nd, c850 on Dec 6th, 530 on Dec 20th. Watford, probable breeding.

Middx: Haysden Hill, 15-20 pairs bred. Staines Res, 500 on Apr 22nd.

Kent: Greatness Pits, c500 on Apr 22nd and c250 on Apr 24th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, monthly maxima: 4,569 Jan, 3,770 Feb, 2,421 Mar, 540 July, 1,858 Aug, 2,447 Sep, 6,940 Oct, and 3,788 Dec. Holmethorpe SP, 2,500 on Jan 18th and Feb 1st, 2,000 on Sep 26th. Island Barn Res, 1,260 on 11th Feb and 460 on Feb 25th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 57 on Jan 10th, 72 on Feb 19th and 73 on Feb 22nd. Paddington Green, nesting attempt. Regent's Park, two pairs bred; 167 on May 16th. Regent's Park Road, one pair with brood of three young.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Status: regular late summer and autumn visitor, widely reported in smaller numbers at other times of year.

There has been another decline in overall numbers, with a drop of about 18% on last year's figures and about 33% on 2007's totals. However, the overall pattern between the last three years remains consistent, with numbers peaking during July, August and September, reflecting birds moving through after the breeding season, with a few staying to winter but the majority moving on.

The following table shows monthly maxima for all those sites where counts of five or more birds were noted during the year.

| Yellow-legged Gull | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Essex | Grays | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 10 | - | - |
| | Purfleet, Fanns Farm | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | - |
| | Rainham Marshes | 3 | 3 | 2 | - | - | 2 | 15 | 14 | 7 | 23 | 14 | 18 |
| | W Thurrock Marshes | 22 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Middx | KGVI Res | - | - | - | - | - | 11 | 48 | 63 | 32 | 11 | - | - |
| | Staines Res | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 2 | 8 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Bucks | Colnbrook Tip | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 47 | - | 10 | 2 | - |
| | Horton Fields | - | - | - | - | - | - | 12 | 38 | 38 | 25 | - | - |
| | Q. Mother Res | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 10 | 6 | 65 | 30 | 15 | 1 | 2 |
| Kent | Crossness | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 11 | 4 |
| | Dartford Marshes | 7 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - |
| | Thames Barrier | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | - | - |
| Surrey | Wetland Centre | 5 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| 2009 Totals | | 40 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 28 | 94 | 224 | 118 | 108 | 39 | 28 |
| 2008 Totals | | 39 | 25 | 22 | 11 | 11 | 16 | 162 | 237 | 196 | 103 | 80 | 71 |

All Inner London records are detailed below.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, adult on eight dates between Jan 10th and Dec 8th, 1st-winter bird on Jan 29th and Feb 2nd. Lambeth Bridge, one on Apr 8th. Regent's Park, one recorded on ten dates between Mar 6th and Oct 18th. Rotherhithe, singles on six dates between Feb 11th and Aug 15th. Southwark Bridge, one on Apr 1st. St George's Wharf, Vauxhall, one on Oct 4th and 10th. Wandsworth Park, one on Jan 6th. Westminster Bridge, two on Jan 24th.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

Status: rare visitor.

This species was given full specific status by the BOU in 2007. Previously all records were published regardless of whether descriptions were provided or not. As it has now become apparent that there are issues in establishing a firm identification, the Records Committee will now be reviewing all published records, while future records require descriptions away from Beddington, Crossness and Rainham. This is so we can establish the true status of this species in our area and monitor it in future years. If you believe you have genuine records of Caspian Gull, please submit a full description, preferably with photographs, to Richard Bonser. We would appreciate it if observers could submit descriptions of all previous Caspian Gulls. In the 2006 LBR a paper was published which looked at the identification of Caspian Gulls.

Essex: KGV Dock, Woolwich, adult on Nov 15th, 27th & 28th. Rainham Marshes, recorded on at least 34 dates throughout the year, involving at least seven individuals, maximum count of four.

Herts: Amwell NR, 1st-winter bird on Feb 15th, 3rd-winter on Nov 28th & 29th and Dec 13th, a 4th-winter on Nov 29th, and a 2nd-winter on Dec 22nd.

Middx: KGVI Res, one on six dates between July 7th and Aug 2nd, with a different bird on Aug 22nd. Q. Mary Res, one on Jan 11th and June 14th. Staines Res, adult on Feb 22nd.

Bucks: Colnbrook, adult on Jan 4th & 25th and Dec 27th & 28th. Horton Fields, juv on Sep 6th. Q. Mother Res, recorded on 21 dates, involving at least five birds, maximum count of two.

Kent: Crossness, 1st-winter bird on Nov 22nd & 29th. Dartford Marshes, one on Feb 15th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, recorded on 18 dates, involving at least four individuals, with maximum count of two. Island Barn Res, adult on Sep 23rd and same bird on Oct 21st & 29th. Walton Res, one on Nov 5th and Dec 21st.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Status: scarce winter visitor, more regular in cold weather.

A reasonable year, with Rainham and Beddington both having regular individuals visiting, which raised the number of bird days for the recording area.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, juv on Feb 8th (PHT), with two on Feb 14th (PSt *et al*) and singles on 16 dates between Mar 15th and Apr 16th (mo).

Herts: Amwell NR, juv on Jan 25th (BR), 30th (THL), Feb 9th & 10th and Apr 6th (BR).

Middx: Staines Res, one on Apr 16th (FJM), May 12th (RWa) & 16th (PN).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, juv on Feb 16th and Apr 16th (CDRH).

Kent: Crossness, juv on Mar 29th (JKA), a juv from Mar 29th to Apr 24th (IM) and a 2nd juv from Mar 31st to Apr 18th (JT)

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, juv on Jan 1st (JPA) and then on at least 52 further dates until May 29th (mo). Holmethorpe SP, juv on Jan 1st and Feb 1st (GWJH). Island Barn Res, juv on Jan 17th & 20th (DMH), Jan 31st (SJS) and Mar 11th (DMH). Lake Farm CP, one on Jan 25th (PN). QE II Res, one on Jan 15th (DMH). Apart from the Lake Farm bird, all these Surrey records are of the same juv bird.

In Lond: Vauxhall Bridge, juv on 21st May (SD).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Status: scarce winter visitor, more regular in cold weather.

A fairly normal series of records this year.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, juv on Mar 9th (DSm), 2nd-winter on Mar 10th (HV, JSm), juv on Mar 11th (ELBF) and also 2nd-winter on Mar 11th (HV, IS *et al*), 2nd-winter on Mar 14th (PRr) and also juv on Mar 14th (HV), 2nd-winter on Mar 19th (BB), juv on Mar 20th (PPn) and juv on Mar 21st (RSPB).

Herts: Amwell NR, 2nd-winter on Feb 8th & 9th (BR, AR, LGRE).

Kent: R. Thames, Belvedere, one on Mar 10th (IM).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Jan 4th (MN)

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Status: fairly common winter visitor in small numbers, less common at other seasons.

Following on from last year's first breeding record, there were four possible breeding records. Compared to last year, the overall number of counts of over 50 are slightly down; counts of 50+ came from six sites (with combined maxima of c560 individuals), compared to six sites in 2008 (c965), eight sites in 2007 (c1,065), 11 sites in 1999 (c1,260) and nine sites in 1989 (c1,400).

Listed below are possible breeding records and counts of 50 or more.

Essex: Barking Bay, pair appearing territorial and on later date seen with begging juvenile bird. Rainham Marshes, 50 on Feb 9th, 64 on Nov 12th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 170 on Jan 25th.

Middx: Brent Res, pair seen mating on raft and on later date with nesting material.

Bucks: Colnbrook, 62 on Dec 28th. Q. Mother Res, 107 on Jan 6th, 137 on Dec 28th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 86 on Jan 1st. Holmethorpe SP, 75 on Jan 18th. QE II Res, adult with begging young, may have bred locally. Walton Res, 52 on Jan 4th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 8th, Feb 11th, Mar 18th, and Oct 18th. Paddington Green, adult on May 9th. Regent's Park, two birds on Jan 2nd, Mar 25th and Apr 14th. The Strand, pair of adults with two newly fledged youngsters, may have bred nearby. Vauxhall Bridge, one on July 24th.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Status: uncommon spring and autumn passage migrant.

This year's total of 21 birds was half of the 2008 total, although more than the 19 in 2007. Spring passage was from Apr 17th to June 12th, although there were also two July records. Surprisingly there were no autumn records, in comparison to the 22 recorded in autumn 2008 (though this included an unprecedented flock of 14). Most sightings were typically brief fly-bys.

Essex: Banbury Res, two on May 13th (PLt). KGV Res, one on May 13th (DSm). Rainham Marshes, one on May 1st and two on May 13th (mo). Royal Albert Dock, North Woolwich, one on July 6th (DE-H).

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, adult on Aug 7th, on the main pit from 15:45 onwards (mo).

Middx: Brent Res, one on May 30th (AGV). Staines Res, four on Apr 24th (RWa) & 30th



Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* is being detected with increasing frequency in the London Area, one of this scarce species' few strongholds in Britain. This bird was at Walton Reservoir on 5 November. (Dave Harris)

(REI, DJM, PN), two on May 9th (REI *et al*), with singles on May 14th (RWa) and June 6th (FJM).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on Apr 17th (FP) & 24th (MJS). London Wetland Centre, two NW on May 25th (NPS). QE II Res, singles on May 14th and June 12th (DMH).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Status: regular spring and autumn passage migrant, with numbers varying annually with weather conditions and breeding success on the continent.

Allowing for duplication of individuals between sites, 397 birds were recorded during the year. This is more normal than the huge influx of c950 last year. The first bird was on Apr 18th, three days earlier than in 2008. Spring passage peaked at 115 on May 13th, and was largely confined to this date. Aug 6th saw the peak autumn passage of 90 birds, including a flock of 54 at Q. Mother Res, on a day when there was an influx nationally. The last individuals were on Sep 16th. September passage was extremely poor, with only five birds seen probably due to the lack of easterly winds and overcast conditions early in the month.

Essex: Banbury Res, one on May 13th. Barking Bay, one on Aug 6th. Fairlop Waters, one on May 15th. Holyfield Lake, four on 13th May. KGV Res, 13 on May 13th with one of these until May 15th, and nine on Aug 25th. Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 29th, 16 on May 13th and one on Sep 15th. Walthamstow Res, a juvenile on Aug 7th, two on Aug 23rd and a further two on Aug 31st. William Girling Res, 14 dropped in after a rain shower on Aug 10th.

Herts: Aldenham Res, one on May 13th. Amwell NR, seven on May 13th. Bury Lake, three on Jan 1st. Hilfield Park Res, six on May 13th, one on June 6th. Stanborough Lakes, one on June 13th. Tyttenhanger GP, four on May 13th, one on Aug 7th & 14th. Verulamium Park, one on July 17th.

Middx: Brent Res, six on May 13th, one on June 1st, and singles on four dates between Aug 23rd & 27th. Q. Mary Res, 15 on May 13th, eight on Aug 7th, singles on Aug 22nd and Sep 16th. Staines Res, one on May 1st, 24 on May 13th, three on May 29th (one still on May 30th), then seen on five dates to June 6th, max of four on June 4th. One on July 18th; then seen daily Aug 6th to 11th, peaking at 24 on Aug 6th; 25 on Aug 25th and one on Sep 13th. Stoke Newington Res, one on Sep 16th, the first for several decades.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, ten on June 1st. Up to 54 (53 adults and a juvenile) on Aug 6th with seven remaining until early morning on Aug 7th, and a juvenile on Sep 15th. Horton GP, one on June 1st & 4th.

Kent: Crossness, one on Apr 18th, two on May 18th and one on May 26th; autumn passage totals were three on Aug 6th, four on 7th, one on 9th, four on 11th with two of these until 13th, and then nine W along R. Thames on Aug 23rd.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on May 13th and Aug 24th. Holmethorpe SP, six on May 13th. Island Barn Res, four on May 13th with one still on May 14th. QE II Res, three on June 4th, eight on Aug 6th, two on 10th, 13 on 25th-26th and two on 27th when flushed by a Peregrine.

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Status: rare vagrant.

An excellent year, with two individuals at Staines Res. A relatively lean autumn Black Tern passage along the R. Thames was presumably a factor in there being no September juveniles this year.

Middx: Staines Res, a well observed second-summer from May 11th-13th (CG *et al*), on N basin with another individual, a moulting second-summer or older, on the evening of Aug 7th (RWa *et al*) before departing high with 22 Black Terns at 19:45.

If White-winged Black Tern Chlidonias leucopterus is to be found anywhere in the London Area, Staines Reservoirs are odds-on favourite. This traditional site attracted a smart adult on 11 May. (Andrew Moon)



Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Status: uncommon passage migrant, often in small flocks.

Another good year with 92 recorded, compared to 100 in 2008. The first sighting was on Apr 8th while the last was on Oct 9th (Apr 22nd and Sep 26th in 2008). Compared to most years, when this species shows a distinct autumn bias, nearly two thirds of 2009 records were in the April to June spring period. A flock of 14 birds flying south over Alexandra Park on Aug 26th was the largest flock recorded, exceptional for only the sixth site record.

Essex: Barking Bay, two on Apr 11th and on Aug 4th. KGV Res, four on Apr 8th. Rainham Marshes, one on May 14th, followed by two on 15th and two on 17th, one on June 1st, three seen in Sep, and a juvenile on Oct 9th. Walthamstow Res, two on Apr 28th, four landed on May 14th and three flew south on June 28th. William Girling Res, two on Sep 9th. Woodford Green, one on July 30th.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, one for five minutes on Apr 25th. Potters Bar, one on Aug 1st. Rye Meads RSPB, one on Apr 25th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Apr 24th and 14 on Aug 26th were the fifth and sixth site records. Brent Res, two on Apr 24th. KGV Res, two SW on Apr 12th. Lee Valley, one at Lee Mouth on June 7th. Staines Res, two NW on Apr 10th, one on June 27th and one on Aug 29th.

Bucks: Horton GP, one on May 1st (seen previously at Q. Mother Res). Q. Mother Res, one on May 1st, June 26th and Aug 29th, an adult and juvenile on Sep 10th.

Kent: Crossness, one on Apr 11th (presumably one of the birds in Barking Bay) was followed by singles on Apr 13th, 18th & 20th, two on Aug 4th and three on Sep 24th. Woolwich Ferry, one on Sep 19th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles noted on May 14th, June 26th & 28th. London Wetland Centre, three on June 28th. QE II Res, two on Apr 12th & 24th, singles on May 1st and June 16th, two on Aug 29th.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Status: common summer visitor and passage migrant.

2009 was an extremely poor year for the species, in terms of breeding success and passage numbers. The first bird arrived at Staines Res on Apr 4th (same date as 2008's earliest). The first double figure count was 13 at Crossness on Apr 11th, although spring passage remained fairly steady with 115 at Staines Res on May 1st being the peak count. Autumn passage was extremely low, with no records at QE II Res during the whole of September. Autumn high counts were 160 at Q. Mother Res on Aug 7th and 102 past Rainham Marshes on Sep 9th (cf autumn peak counts of 603 in 2008, 840 in 2007). One at Rainham Marshes on Oct 14th was the last record.

The decline in breeding numbers continued, with c122 pairs reported (c166 pairs in 2008, c196 in 2007). Breeding success too was extremely poor with only a dozen sites recording successful breeding. However, Seventy Acres Lake bucked this trend with 37 pairs rearing a minimum of 66 young. Where first brood failure occurred, some re-laying was noted. For example, at Brent Res (where egg predation was seen by Coot, Lesser Black-backed Gull and Magpie) 17 out of the 23 pairs relaid, with 26 chicks successfully

fledged from these replacement broods. One was caught by a fishing rod at Walthamstow Res on July 7th. Comprehensive breeding notes are included in the text below.

Essex: Barking Bay, max of 120 Aug 4th. KGV Res, max of 60 on Apr 20th. Nazeing GP, 75 on Apr 28th. Rainham Marshes, max of 102 on Sep 9th and the last on Oct 14th. Walthamstow Res, only 21 nests (31 in 2008) on June 1st, successful breeding with at least ten fledged young noted on July 16th.

Herts: Aldenham Res, max of 15 on May 13th, probable breeding with a pair on a raft June 14th (no success noted). Amwell NR, only four chicks from ten pairs seen on June 23rd. Hilfield Park Res, ten incubating adults on June 6th although only one young fully fledged on July 12th, with failed birds re-laying though success unknown. Maple Lodge NR, pair bred successfully fledging a single chick. Rye Meads RSPB, breeding reduced to 21 pairs with breeding success unknown. Seventy Acres Lake, 37 pairs reared a minimum of 66 young. Stocker's Lake, 11 pairs nesting June 14th with five juveniles on June 21st.

Middx: Brent Res, 23 nests all failed in first brood, with re-laying producing 26 young on Aug 12th. East India Dock Basin, one fledged juvenile on July 5th. Ponders End Lake, five pairs successfully bred (number of fledged young unknown). Staines Res, max of 115 on May 1st breeding success extremely low, and perhaps only one chick successfully fledged (cf 15 in 2008).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, max of 160 SW in three flocks on Aug 7th. Thorney CP, 20 on June 12th included 4 chicks, and eight chicks on July 11th.

Kent: Crossness, no breeding data with peak count of 140 on Aug 1st presumably including some locally bred juveniles. 73 W on Aug 23rd.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, seven pairs bred. QE II Res, successful breeding with seven flying juveniles on July 27th. Walton Res, eight pairs attempted to breed but all failed.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, five records of up to three birds between Apr 15th and June 23rd. Paddington Green, singles W on Apr 21st and May 28th. Rotherhithe, first recorded at Greenland Dock on Apr 16th with two pairs (on tern rafts on Canada Water and Surrey Water) successfully rearing two young each. Tower Bridge, two W on May 28th and three on June 9th. Westminster, one on July 22nd and six on Aug 7th.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Status: regular spring and autumn passage migrant, often in small flocks with numbers varying annually.

This year's numbers were below average, with a total of 191 noted (931 in 2008). Spring passage, however, was above average with 157 individuals (allowing for duplication between sites) between the first three at East India Dock Basin on Apr 10th (Apr 14th in 2008) and 31st May. The low annual total was due to poor autumn passage with 12 in August, 15 in September and three in October the sum totals. A juvenile at Rainham Marshes on Oct 9th was the last of the year.

Essex: Banbury Res, 21 N on May 13th. Barking Bay, one on Apr 11th. Holyfield Hall Farm, two on Apr 28th. KGV Res, one on Apr 15th, two on May 15th. Nazeing GP, two on Apr 28th. Rainham Marshes, three on Apr 19th, 11 on May 13th, then four on Sep 14th,

singles on Sep 15th & 16th, and a juvenile on Oct 9th. Walthamstow Res, five N on Apr 28th, two on May 14th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Apr 30th, and 12 on May 13th. Hilfield Park Res, one on Apr 15th and two on May 8th.

Middx: Brent Res, singles on Apr 16th and Aug 26th. East India Dock Basin, three NE calling on Apr 10th. Lee Mouth, one on Apr 17th, three on Aug 1st. Q. Mary Res, four juveniles on Sep 16th. Staines Res, three on Apr 11th; then seen on a further ten dates in April with max of 12 on Apr 15th & 25 on 19th; seen on eight dates in May max of three; one on July 30th, juv on Aug 7th and two on Aug 10th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, three NE on Apr 18th and one NE Apr 19th; adult on July 31st, three juv on Sep 14th, one on Sep 16th and two juv on Oct 2nd. 62 'commic' terns that flew through on Aug 25th contained some Arctics.

Kent: Crossness, one on Apr 11th, 19th & 26th. Woolwich Ferry, juv on Sep 17th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, two on Apr 17th, single on May 6th, two on 8th, one on 9th and two on 10th. Island Barn Res, two on Apr 24th. London Wetland Centre, one on Apr 15th and three on Aug 26th. QE II Res, one on May 24th. Wimbledon Common, two on May 1st.

In Lond: Rotherhithe, two on R. Thames on Apr 15th.

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Status: scarce autumn and winter visitor, subject to occasional winter influxes.

For the second year running, a bird was seen on the R. Thames in September. Since the last influx in 1986 when 90+ individuals were seen, there have been 17 sightings.

A common summer visitor and passage migrant in the London Area, Common Tern Sterna hirundo can often be viewed at close range at East India Dock NR, at the mouth of the River Lea. (David Darrell-Lambert)





Separating Arctic Sterna paradisaea from Common S hirundo Terns can be challenging for London birders during migration times, but this Arctic was readily identifiable at Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir in May. (Dave Harris)

Essex/Kent: On Sep 17th, one was seen drifting upstream on the R. Thames at Rainham Marshes (mo) and later was seen flying downstream at Crossness (JKA).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Status: very rare visitor.

Up to 1983, there had been at least 61 records and 21 for Guillemot (Moon, A.V., 1983. The occurrence of pelagic seabirds in the London Area. *Lond. Bird Rep.* 48: 106-119). Since then there have been a further nine records, including this one. Since 2000, there have been two Puffins, six Guillemots, two Little Auks and no Razorbills.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, a first-winter was seen drifting downstream on the R. Thames on Sep 23rd (AT).

Rock Dove *Columbia livia*

Status: abundant feral resident; controlled in some locations.

The BBS shows a decrease of 25% in London (8% across the UK) between 1995 and 2009. The decline in London has been attributed to control measures but predation by Peregrine

and Sparrowhawk could also be a factor. Records were only received from 29 sites so it remains seriously under-recorded. It breeds throughout the year with juveniles seen in both Jan and Dec at Watford. There were only three other breeding reports.

Peak counts for sites with over 200 birds (50 for London boroughs) and all records for Inner London are given.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, 240 on July 31st. West Ham Park, 78 on Nov 28th.

Herts: Redwell Wood Farm, 200 on Dec 20th.

Middx: Darlands Lake, 150 on Nov 11th. Lake Farm CP, 350 on Dec 2nd, Harlington Fields, 300 on Sep 23rd, Horsenden Hill, 280 on Oct 31st. Pymmes Park, 175 on Dec 16th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 50+ on Nov 11th. Croham Hurst, 100 on Oct 17th. Queen's Promenade, 120 on Sep 30th. Surbiton, 150 on 11th and 26th Nov.

In Lond: Hyde Park, highest count 475. Birds also present at Bloomsbury, Buckingham Palace Gdns, and Charing Cross. Vauxhall Station, eight pairs bred under the bridges.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Status: breeding resident and passage migrant.

A total of at least 69 breeding pairs (56 in 2008) from 18 sites were reported this year. Essex and Hertfordshire used to be considered the strongholds for this species where arable land predominates yet there were only two reports from these counties. In contrast, Middlesex and Surrey were the strongholds this year. The BBS shows a small increase of 4% across the UK between 1995 and 2009; there is insufficient data to determine a London trend. However, the number being reported is lower than in the 1990s when between 100 and 160 pairs were reported from 50 to 70 sites. However, this species is under-reported and often difficult to confirm breeding so it remains unclear whether there has been a decline. Herts Bird Club Atlas data suggests there is no decline in Herts.

Sites where Stock Dove was reported

| | Essex | Herts | Middx | Bucks | Kent | Surrey | In London |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|-----------|
| Sites | 19 | 31 | 11 | 2 | 27 | 58 | 3 |
| Sites with pairs | 1 | 1 | 7 | - | 3 | 6 | 2 |
| Pairs | 1 | 1 | 34 | - | 11 | 22 | - |

The highest count was an amazing 1,251 from Woodoaks Farm, near Maple Cross on Apr 11th. This count is the highest ever made in the London Area and probably the UK, and suggests there are potentially 600 pairs within flying distance of Maple Cross!

Peak counts for sites with over 50 birds (20 for London boroughs), sites with more than five pairs (number of pairs in brackets) and all sites for Inner London are given.

Essex: Dagenham Riverside, 85 on Jan 3rd. Fairlop Waters, 26 on Feb 28th. Ingrebourne Valley, 60 on Sep 20th. Orsett Fen, 96 on Dec 8th. Rainham Marshes, 170 on Oct 6th. Wennington, 80 on Nov 17th.

Herts: Bedmond, 100 on Apr 2nd. Shenley, 150 on Jan 17th. West Hyde, 70 on Feb 19th. Woodoaks Farm, 1,251 on Apr 11th.

Middx: Abney Park Cemetery (10). Alexandra Park (6+). Ferny Hill Farm, 32 on Dec 12th. Horsenden Hill (11). Staines Res, 110 on Sep 9th. Vicarage Farm, 61 on Oct 31st.

Bucks: Colnbrook, 140 on Dec 26th. Horton GP, 400 on Jan 10th.

Kent: Crossness, 35 on Dec 17th.

Surrey: Wimbledon Common (10). Beddington Farmlands, 50 on Oct 3rd. Canons Farm, 75 on Oct 11th. Holmethorpe SP, 84 on Feb 17th. London Wetland Centre, 33 on Sep 20th. Harlington Fields, 100 on Sep 23rd. Tandridge, 50 on May 2nd.

In Lond: Buckingham Palace, bred. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, bred, 22 on Mar 17th. Regent's Park, 18 on May 4th. No breeding records were received from Regent's Park where there were ten pairs in 2008.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Status: abundant breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The BBS shows an increase of 68% in London (38% across the UK) between 1995 and 2009. However, the species is under-recorded with very few breeding reports. The autumn passage receives better coverage, with a minimum of 30,981 counted flying overhead (17,425 in 2008, 32,970 in 2007 and 105,420 in 2006). Only two large wintering flocks were reported: 2,500 at Harlington Fields on Feb 13th and 1,000 at Tyttenhanger GP on Jan 17th.

Woodpigeon - highest autumn counts, 2009

| Date | Total of highest counts | No. of sites | Site and (direction) for main overhead flocks |
|----------|-------------------------|--------------|---|
| Oct 18th | 1,040 | 5 | 415 Wanstead Flats. |
| Oct 19th | 149 | 1 | Lake Farm CP (S). |
| Oct 26th | 2,705 | 5 | 1,800 Brent Res. |
| Oct 28th | 150 | 1 | Beddington Farmlands. |
| Oct 29th | 1,365 | 2 | 1,277 London Wetland Centre (S). |
| Oct 30th | 7,110 | 8 | 2,000 Rainham Marshes, 1,830 Brent Res (S/SW). |
| Oct 31st | 350 | 1 | Kensington Gdns. |
| Nov 2nd | 1,575 | 3 | 625 Wanstead Flats (S), 600 Alexandra Park |
| Nov 4th | 560 | 1 | Stanwell Moor (S). |
| Nov 5th | 8,122 | 4 | 4,110 Brent Res (S/SW), 2,380 Paddington Green (S), 1,281 Springfield Park. |
| Nov 6th | 800 | 3 | 400 Ingrebourne Valley. |
| Nov 7th | 1,062 | 3 | 565 Horsenden Hill. |
| Nov 8th | 2,526 | 3 | 1,075 Rainham Marshes, 1,000 Brent Res. |
| Nov 10th | 2,960 | 4 | 1,400 Regent's Park, 1,360 Greenwich Park. |
| Nov 12th | 435 | 2 | 300 London Wetland Centre (SW). |
| Nov 14th | 250 | 1 | Watford (NW). |
| Nov 17th | 383 | 1 | London Wetland Centre. |
| Nov 25th | 120 | 1 | Beddington Farmlands. |
| Nov 26th | 479 | 1 | Wanstead Flats (S). |

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Status: common breeding resident, scarce in central London.

The BBS shows an increase of 55% in London (25% across the UK) between 1995 and 2009. It was recorded from an average of 48 tetrads (65%) in the BBS in the London boroughs yet records were received from only 36 sites in the LNHS Recording Area (one site in Kent

and two sites in Middlesex) suggesting that it is seriously under-recorded. In the 1988-94 Atlas, there were very few reports from Inner London boroughs; the increase in London might suggest that they should have been colonised but the level of under-recording does not allow us to say whether this is the case. They were reported from four sites in Inner London and two more sites from Inner London boroughs. Peak counts of 25 or more birds and all records from Inner London boroughs are listed.

Essex: Reported from ten sites. Fairlop Waters, 50 on Aug 31st. Grey Goose Farm, 30 on Nov 6th. Hangmans Wood, 75 on Aug 31st. Mayesbrook Park, 47 on Jan 31st. Rainham Marshes, 34 on Feb 3rd. West Ham Park, up to six on monthly transect in Mar, Aug and Nov.

Herts: Reported from six sites. Wood Oaks Farm, 100 on Sep 2nd. Woodside Farm, 48 on Oct 25th. Watford, 40 flushed by a Sparrowhawk on Nov 19th.

Kent: Sutton at Hone, 35 on Feb 17th.

Surrey: Reported from 13 sites. Beddington Farmlands, 26 on Oct 10th. London Wetland Centre, seen most months with maximum of six on Sep 25th. Rushett Farm, 50 on July 19th. Tooting Common, up to two seen on six dates. Wandsworth Common, one on June 25th and two on Oct 15th.

In Lond: Hyde Park, one on Sep 10th and Oct 21st. Paddington Green, one on Oct 5th and Nov 26th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 25th, two on May 10th, one on July 31st and two on Oct 30th. Rotherhithe, one on Sep 25th.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Status: localised summer breeding visitor and scarce passage migrant.

The BBS shows a decline of 74% across the UK between 1995 and 2009. In London, there is insufficient data to determine a trend due to the species scarcity. Last year, there were only two probable breeding pairs. This year, birds were again seen or heard regularly from two sites (Rye Meads and Trevereux) but they were seen at a further nine sites in June and July suggesting that they may have been breeding. Nonetheless, its status as a breeding species in our Area remains precarious. Excluding the two breeding sites, only 33 records (33 in 2008) were received: two in Apr, 14 in May, five in June, four in July, one in Aug, six in Sep and one in Oct. The first bird was seen on Apr 25th and the last on Oct 20th. All records are listed.

Essex: Abridge, one on May 16th. Fairlop Waters, one on May 12th. Great Warley, pair on May 28th and June 3rd. Greensted, two singing on May 28th, three singing on July 2nd. Hornchurch CP, juvenile on Sep 11th. Ingrebourne Valley, one on Aug 23rd. Navestock, one on May 24th. Netherhall GP, three on July 11th. Rainham Marshes, one on May 7th and Sep 11th. Stanford Rivers, one singing on July 2nd. Wanstead Flats, one on May 9th and Sep 3rd. Woodford Green, one on May 19th.

Herts: Aldenham, one on June 14th. Amwell NR, one singing on May 25th. Essendon, one on May 15th. How Wood, one on June 19th. Rye Meads RSPB, up to two seen on five dates. South Mimms, one singing on July 7th.

Middx: Kempton NR, one on May 11th.

Kent: Crossness, one on Apr 25th and Oct 20th. Dartford Marshes, one on Apr 26th and juvenile on Sep 23rd. Lullingstone, one singing on June 21st.

Surrey: Beddington Farlands, one on May 8th and 15th, one on Sep 2nd. Holmethorpe SP, singles on May 17th and Aug 2nd. London Wetland Centre, one on Sep 23rd. Trevereux, one singing in May and June, last heard on Aug 8th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on May 10th.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Status: naturalised breeding resident, increasing in range and numbers.

Reported from a total of 120 sites (206 last year). This apparent decline is misleading since in most of our vice-counties it is still increasing. Most of the decrease was due to a drop in Surrey records, perhaps because it is now being taken for granted in Surrey and so no longer being reported. There were more breeding records this year, however, confirmed breeding is still infrequent considering the increase.

The map below shows the distribution of sightings across the LNHS area although it suffers from the under-recording in Surrey mentioned above.

Roost counts were received from seven sites giving a total of 9,165 birds (10,750 last year). Counts were received from three new roosts (Mitcham Common, Sutcliffe Park and Wormwood Scrubs) but no count was received from Stanwell. Other large counts often relate to birds flying from/to roost. Project Parakeet (www.projectparakeet.co.uk) started organising coordinated counts of roosts in London from January 2010.

Roost counts and a summary for each county are presented, including the highest counts and breeding reports.

Ring-necked Parakeet records per 1-km sq

■ 300 - 10,200 (14)

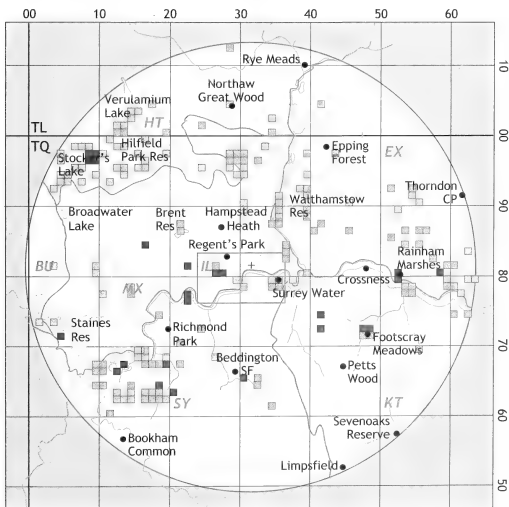
■ 200 - 300 (10)

■ 100 - 200 (13)

■ 1 - 100 (151)

□ LNHS Area

□ County boundaries



GIGL

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Greenspace Information for
Greater London
www.gigl.org.uk

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Peak counts of Ring-necked Parakeet flying to/from roost

| | 2009 | 2008 |
|-----------------------|---|-------|
| Hersham GP | 3,000 (Jan) | 1,200 |
| Hither Green Cemetery | 600 (Nov) | 3,000 |
| | Flying NE to roost over Grove Park | |
| Holmethorpe SP | 1,000 roosting mid-Sep | 450 |
| Mitcham Common | 1,785 (Oct) | - |
| | Flying S from roost over Beddington Farmlands | |
| West Ewell | 1,000 (Jan) | 4,000 |
| Stanwell | - | 2,100 |
| Sutcliffe Park | 780 (Dec) | - |
| Wormwood Scrubs | 1,000 (Mar) | - |

Essex: Reported from 41 sites with 20+ at five sites. Mar Dyke Valley, three pairs breeding. Rainham Marshes, 68 on Nov 25th.

Herts: Reported from 45 sites with 20+ at 11 sites. Cassiobury Park, 100 on Oct 15th and three juveniles on Aug 5th. Maple Lodge, juvenile seen at nest hole on May 24th.

Middx: Reported from 26 sites with 20+ at eight sites. Horsenden Hill, 262 on Nov 28th.

Bucks: Reported from two sites with 20+ at one site. Wraysbury GP, 50 on Sep 1st.

Kent: Reported from nine sites with 20+ at six sites. Albany Park, 200 on June 25th.

Surrey: Reported from 39 sites with 20+ at 14 sites. Holmethorpe SP, 'several' pairs bred. Kingston Cemetery, two pairs bred. London Wetland Centre, 176 on Oct 16th. Wimbledon Common, seven pairs bred.

In Lond: Bred at Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns with eight juv on June 23rd and a maximum of 47 in Oct. Up to six recorded from Lambeth, Paddington Green, Rotherhithe, Southwark Park, St James's Park, Victoria Park.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Status: breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

Birds were reported from a total of 96 sites this year (90 in 2008). The first was seen on Apr 5th and the last on Oct 5th. Breeding was confirmed at five sites: Rye Meads RSPB (two fledglings ringed), Shenley, Smallford (being fed by a Dunnock), Stanwell Moor, Vicarage Farm (being fed by a Dunnock) and Walthamstow Res (being fed by a Reed Warbler). However, breeding is difficult to confirm for this species and breeding is likely to be more widespread. Birds were reported on five or more dates in June from Amwell NR, Ingrebourne Valley and Rainham Marshes and juveniles were seen in June or July at Bedfords Park, Bricket Wood, Hatfield Aerodrome, Howe Green, Rye House RSPB, Shenley and Welham Green. If these criteria are taken to indicate breeding, then there would have been 13 pairs. If all birds reported in June were breeding, then there would have been 22 pairs. Of these 22 pairs, there were none from the Inner London boroughs but there were six from the outer London boroughs (Bedfords Park, Crossness, Ingrebourne Valley, Lake Farm CP, Parkside Farm and Walthamstow Res). No records were received for Inner London.

Sites where Cuckoo were reported

| | Spring (Apr and May) | Summer (June) | Autumn (July to Oct) |
|--------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Essex | 20 | 5 | 6 |
| Herts | 39 | 7 | 14 |
| Middx | 9 | 5 | 3 |
| Bucks | 2 | 2 | - |
| Kent | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| Surrey | 10 | - | 1 |

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Status: rare breeding resident.

For the second year running, two pairs were confirmed breeding, maintaining its precarious position as a breeding species in our Area. One pair raised four young in Essex and another pair raised two young in Herts. There were further signs of hope since birds were seen at another nine sites (five on more than one occasion) during the breeding season. During the year it was seen at a total of 36 sites (three within the London boroughs). It was more often reported during the winter months, particularly in the first winter period, which may reflect a poor breeding season.

Sites where Barn Owl were reported

| | Winter (Jan-Apr) | Summer (May-Aug) | Winter (Sep-Dec) |
|--------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Essex | 8 | 4 | 4 |
| Herts | 13 | 6 | 6 |
| Middx | 1 | - | 2 |
| Kent | 1 | - | 1 |
| Surrey | 3 | 1 | 1 |

Little Owl *Athena noctua*

Status: localised breeding resident, introduced to UK in the 19th century.

Records were received from 126 sites (101 in 2008) but breeding was only confirmed at six sites (25 in 2008 when there was a special survey in Richmond Park locating 18 pairs). The number of sites where it is being reported is currently at unprecedented levels while the number reported breeding is very low. Reporting during Atlas surveys is likely to be high but even so the highest number reported during the last Atlas (1988-94) was 90+ in 1989. Whether there has been a real increase is difficult to determine. Birds were seen in the breeding season at 82 sites (14 were within the London boroughs with only Regent's Park being in the Inner London boroughs).

Essex: Reported from 21 sites. Seen on more than four dates at Fairlop Waters, Ingrebourne Valley, Netherhouse Farm and Wanstead Flats.

Herts: Reported from 75 sites (22 were Atlas records). Confirmed breeding at Moor Park, Redwell Wood Farm, Stocker's Farm. Seen on more than ten dates at Croxley Green, Hilfield Park Res, Panshanger Park, Stocker's Farm, Tyttenhanger GP, Woodoaks Farm and on more than four dates at a further 11 sites.

Middx: Reported from 11 sites. Confirmed breeding at Vicarage Farm. Seen on more than ten dates at Horsenden Hill but no evidence of nesting.



London is home to a healthy population of Little Owls *Athene noctua*, with pairs of this unobtrusive species in residence as close to the city centre as Regent's Park (pictured) and Hyde Park. (Tony Duckett)

Bucks: Reported only from Q. Mother Res on Oct 25th.

Kent: Reported from Crayford Marshes and Sevenoaks NR.

Surrey: Reported from 15 sites. Seen on more than four dates at Beddington Farmlands, Holmethorpe SP (where 3 juvs seen), Richmond Park, Sandown Park and Tooting Common.

In Lond: Confirmed breeding at Regent's Park.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Status: common breeding resident in the outer parts of the LNHS Recording Area, scarce towards the centre.

Reported from 94 sites (127 in 2008). However, this nocturnal species is severely under-recorded; for instance, there was only one report from Kent. Youngsters were seen at five sites but birds were reported in the breeding season from 56 sites (23 within the London boroughs including three sites within the Inner London boroughs). Breeding was confirmed at 13 sites (eight in 2008).

Essex: Reported from 21 sites. Bred at Bedfords Park, Dagnam Park, Havering CP and Lee Valley Camp Site.

Herts: Reported from 35 sites. Bred at Hilfield Park Res, Maple Lodge, Northaw and Rye Meads, but at two of these sites breeding failed at the egg stage.

Middx: Reported from eight sites. Bred at Abney Park Cemetery and Perivale Wood. Gillespie Park NR, one seen on July 31st.

Bucks: Reported from Black Park.

Kent: Reported from Sevenoaks.

Surrey: Reported from 26 sites. Wimbledon Common, two pairs.

In Lond: Buckingham Palace, one Dec 10th. Reported regularly from Kensington Gdns where three young were seen from Feb 13th and from Regent's Park, where two were calling on Jan 23rd and three young were seen from Mar 7th.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant: rare breeder.

Reported in winter from five sites (four in 2008) with long-staying individuals at two sites. Last year, a pair bred but there was no sign of breeding this year.

Middx: Brent Res, one hunting on Jan 29th (ASMS). Osterley Park, roosted regularly between Jan 3rd and Feb 28th, max of three on Jan 11th (KFr *et al*).

Kent: Site A, two on Feb 19th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, the birds that were roosting at the end of last year were seen until Mar 17th, max of five on several dates in Feb (mo). Richmond Park, one on Mar 20th & 21st (MM & PS).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Status: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, with occasional influxes; rare breeder.

Reported from 18 sites (13 in 2008). In the first three months of the year, there were three sites with long-staying individuals and reports from a further five sites. In April, there was a small influx with the last bird being seen on Apr 24th. The first returning bird was seen on the very early date of Aug 2nd and from the same site on Aug 4th with another nearby



Although numbers of wintering Short-eared Owls *Asio flammeus* fluctuate annually, they can be expected at Rainham Marshes, where this unusually showy individual proved confiding for the camera. (Les Harrison)

on Aug 21st, which may relate to the same bird. Birds seen in early Aug are more likely to relate to summering or breeding birds than passage birds (the last Aug record when there was no breeding was in 1998). However, there were no other reports during the summer, unlike last year, when a pair bred. None were seen in September and the next report was on Oct 14th after which they were seen at nine sites with a small influx in November. Rainham Marshes was the only site to have long-staying individuals. There was a notable record for Inner London where the first at Hyde Park since 1974 was seen.

Sites where Short-eared Owl were reported

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Aug | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Beech Farm GP | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 0 | - |
| North Feltham | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Rainham Marshes | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Other sites | 2 | 1 | - | 6 | - | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Totals 10 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 4 | |

Essex: Fairlop Waters, one between Apr 22nd & 24th. Netherhouse Farm, one on Nov 17th. Rainham Marshes reported regularly Jan 1st to Apr 9th, max of three on Jan 21st and Oct 18th to Dec 24th, max of two on Dec 6th & 10th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP, reported regularly Jan 1st to May 3rd, max three on Jan 27th. Brookmans Park, one on Aug 21st. Cromerhyde Farm, one on Nov 29th. Hatfield Aerodrome, singles on Jan 24th, Feb 8th & 15th, Mar 24th and Apr 8th.

Middx: Kempton NR, one on Feb 26th. KGVI, one on Apr 5th. North Feltham, reported regularly from Jan 21st but according to dog-walkers had been present since late 2008, last seen on Feb 21st, max two on several dates. Northolt, one on Jan 19th. Staines Moor, one on Apr 12th & 17th, Oct 13th, 14th & 23rd, Dec 13th. Staines Res, one on Jan 26th, Apr 13th and Nov 18th. Stoke Newington Res, one on Apr 6th. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Apr 6th.

Surrey: Woodmansterne, one on Dec 2nd. London Wetland Centre, one Oct 23rd.

In Lond: Hyde Park, one on Nov 25th.

European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Status: rare passage migrant, occasionally breeding.

Birds were heard churring at two sites on a single date, a disappointment after last year when there were two pairs at one of these sites.

Kent: Bird churring on July 3rd.

Surrey: Site A, bird churring on May 22nd but not heard on June 11th.

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Status: common, though probably declining, breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

Spring arrivals followed the usual pattern, with Horton GP starting the ball rolling on Apr 10th, a relatively early date - followed by a general influx in the last few days of the month. Numbers over bodies of water then built up with peaks generally around the middle of June, although there were also very high counts at some sites in July. As usual, return passage was largely complete by the end of July; the straggler of the year award

went to a single bird at Horton GP on Sep 20th. A partial albino individual was seen at QE II Res on June 8th.

It is hard to assess the precise numbers of breeding Swifts reported. In only one case were fledglings specifically noted. At another five sites, 'breeding' was stated but on what basis was not specified. At a further eight sites, birds were recorded as 'apparently nesting' or visiting eaves or as flying around previously known breeding sites. And at a further two sites, Swifts were recorded as displaying.

Counts of 300 and over are noted below together with notable records from more central areas and all records of definite or probable breeding.

Essex: Chippingford, at least seven displaying. Chipping Ongar, apparently nesting. KGV Res, 600 on May 15th. Rainham Marshes, 1,000 on May 13th. Walthamstow, 15 displaying. Walthamstow FB, 1,000 on May 27th.

Herts: Bernards Heath, about 20 including several visiting eaves and later some fledglings. Hilfield Park Res, 500 on May 27th. North Watford, 20 around previous breeding site. Oxhey (1). St Albans, c30 birds visiting eaves at presumed colony. Watford (3), seen flying into possible nesting sites at three different locations. Welham Green, 16 flying around previous nesting site.

Middx: Horsenden Hill (1). KGV Res, 1,100 on June 5th, 6,000 flying west in the course of one hour on July 30th. Staines Res, 1,500 on May 15th, 1,000-2,000 on seven dates in the second half of July. Stoke Newington Station, 900 on June 7th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, 600 on July 5th & 10th. Limsfield Chart, small numbers bred. St Peter's Church, Limsfield, small numbers bred. St Mary's Church, Oxted, small numbers bred. Thames Ditton, 37 entering probable nesting site. Walton Res, 600 on June 8th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 110 on May 11th, 100 on May 17th.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

Status: vagrant.

After two blank years, this hard to spot over-shooter put in two appearances, on successive days. These are the 22nd and 23rd records for the LNHS area.

Herts: Aldenham Res, one on Sep 5th (BJ *et al*).

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Sep 6th (GR *et al*).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Status: locally common breeding resident with additional birds in winter.

Recorded at a total of 154 sites, which is considerably more than last year (132) but about the same as from 2005-07. Four or five birds at one time were recorded at five sites: Rainham Marshes, Rye Meads RSPB, Sevenoaks WR, Town Park, Enfield (a family party) and Thorpe Water Park. A very poor year for breeding records, with only 11 definite or probable cases of breeding, and a few more sites where a pair was seen during the breeding season. Compare this to 2002 and 2003, when 44-45 pairs were recorded during the breeding season; since then there has been a trend downwards, with only about 15 pairs in 2008.

The number of sites at which Kingfishers were recorded is shown below for each county together with records of breeding.



Typically, Common Swift Apus apus arrives relatively late in spring and has all but gone by late summer. Mid-summer congregations of birds over reservoirs may be either local feeders or migrants. (Dave Harris)



This one-day Alpine Swift Apus melba was an excellent find at Alexandra Park, and just a short distance away from where the last one was seen in London, on Hampstead Heath in mid-April 2006. (Simon West)

Essex: Recorded at 35 sites. Belhus Woods CP (1). Walthamstow Res (1).

Herts: Recorded at 41 sites. Amwell NR (1). Bricket Wood (1 probable). Hatfield Park, a male with either female or juv. Rye Meads RSPB (1). Tyttenhanger GP, carrying food.

Middx: Recorded at 36 sites. Town Park, Enfield (1).

Bucks: Recorded at 2 sites.

Kent: Recorded at 16 sites. River Ravensbourne, Deptford (1 probable).

Surrey: Recorded at 20 sites. R. Wandle, Butter Hill - Morden Hall Park (2 territories).

In Lond: Recorded at 4 sites: Battersea, Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, Regent's Park, St James's Park.

Wryneck Jynx torquilla

Status: scarce passage migrant.

With three records, this was an average year. The great majority of past records were from August to October but two of this year's were in April.

Essex: Hainault Forest, one on Apr 25th (PGo). Purfleet, one on Apr 25th (JN).

Middx: Q. Mary Res, one Aug 25th to Sep 5th (AJB, HRG).

Green Woodpecker Picus viridis

Status: common breeding resident.

Recorded from 171 sites this year, which is down on last year's 211 but spot on the average for the past eight years (2001-08). Many sites presumably go unrecorded. At least 115 pairs bred (counting records of definite/probable breeding and territories, where they are specifically stated). However, doubtless many more pairs bred, as there were many

Cold weather may be bad for birds but it does bring unusual sights to urban and suburban areas. Here, Green Woodpecker Picus viridis and Fieldfare Turdus pilaris both forage in a Rickmansworth garden. (Andrew Moon)



records where at least two adults were recorded as being present during the breeding season.

Definite or probable breeding numbers are given in brackets below. Also noted are sites where breeding was not mentioned, but six or more individuals were present during the breeding season. Breeding was confirmed in two Inner London Parks and a number of suburban green spaces in London boroughs, such as Tooting Common and Alexandra Park.

Essex: Recorded from 33 sites. Belhus Woods CP (3+ bred), 36 including 20 juvs on July 12th. Green Lane Orsett (1). Greensted (1). Grey Goose Farm (1). Ingrebourne Valley, 11 on 13th July. Mar Dyke Valley (1). Roding Valley (1). Terrells Heath Wood (1). Wanstead Flats (1). Wanstead Park, six on Apr 15th. Warren Gorge (1).

Herts: Recorded from 41 sites. Bernards Heath (1). Bricket Wood (1+), 17 territories. Chess Valley (1). Croxley Common Moor (1). Essendon, seven on Aug 13th. Garston, seven territories. Maple Lodge NR (1). Merry Hill (1). North Mymms Park, seven on Aug 2nd. Oxhey Park (1). Rickmansworth (1). Rye Meads RSPB (1). Smallford (1). St Albans (1). Stocker's Farm (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1). Watford (1). Wood Oaks Farm (1).

Middx: Recorded from 31 sites. Alexandra Park (5). Brent Res (1). Horsenden Hill (c10). Lake Farm CP (1). Oakwood Park (1). Parkside Farm (1). Staines Moor, six on Sep 12th. Totteridge Valley (1+). Trent Park (1). Vicarage Farm (1).

Bucks: Recorded from 2 sites.

Kent: Recorded from 26 sites. Joyden's Wood, eight throughout year. Lullingstone (c3). North Cray Wood (c4). Sevenoaks WR, eight on Apr 4th.

Surrey: Recorded from 33 sites. Arbrook Common (1). Esher Common (2). Kingston-upon-Thames (1). Holmethorpe SP (1). London Wetland Centre (1). Molesey Heath (2). Ravensbury Park (1). The Ledges, Esher (2). Tooting Common (1). Wimbledon Common (c20).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1). Regent's Park (4).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Status: common breeding resident.

Recorded from 197 sites this year, which is down on last year's 262 but very close to the average of 190 over the past eight years. At least 165 pairs bred but this can only be a fraction of the actual number: thus there were many records of one or more birds present at other sites during the breeding season but as the recorders have not specified these constitute 'territories' they have not been included in calculating breeding numbers. Also many areas of suitable habitat were not covered (as is true for many species, of course).

Definite or probable breeding numbers are given in brackets below, for sites with two or more pairs. Also noted are sites where six or more individuals were recorded on one day. There were many other records where 1-3 birds were heard drumming.

Essex: Recorded from 41 sites. Ainslie Wood (2). Belhus Woods CP (2). Claybury Park, seven on Apr 12th. Cornmill Meadows (2). Ingrebourne Valley, ten on Mar 19th. Mar Dyke Valley (2). Thorndon CP, 12 on Feb 19th. Wanstead Park (1 or more), six on Feb 28th. Warren Gorge (2).

Herts: Recorded from 35 sites. Bedmond (2). Bricket Wood (20). Garston (6-8). Howe

Green, six on June 17th and Dec 5th. Little Berkhamsted, eight on Dec 25th. Merry Hill, six on Mar 1st. Northaw Great Wood, six on Dec 14th. Wildhill, seven on Dec 21st. Woodside, six on Feb 22nd.

Middx: Recorded from 42 sites. Alexandra Park (c6). Bushey Park, eight on Feb 11th. Horsenden Hill (16). Trent Park (3). Wormwood Scrubs (perhaps 2).

Bucks: Recorded from 3 sites.

Kent: Recorded from 24 sites. Bexley Woods (5). Joyden's Wood, 13 on Apr 14th.

Surrey: Recorded from 40 sites. Arbrook Common (3). Esher (2). Esher Common (3). Holmethorpe SP (2). Horton CP, eight on Mar 15th. London Wetland Centre, nine on Sep 20th. Prince's Coverts, six on May 20th. The Ledges, Esher (5). West End Common (4). Wimbledon Common (50).

In Lond: Recorded from 12 sites. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2). Regent's Park (1). St James's Park (1).

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Status: scarce and declining breeding resident.

Recorded at only 55 sites this year, which is far fewer than last year (88) and well below the average of 72 over the previous eight years, suggesting a real decline. The 32 of these sites from which there was one or more records in the breeding season are shown below. Unless stated otherwise, the records were no more than a sighting of a single bird (sometimes on more than one date). On the optimistic view that the sight of a pair during the breeding season and/or drumming equates to probable breeding, there were 15 records of breeding. Taking the more conservative view that a breeding record should be backed up by at least a nest hole being excavated, there were only four records.

Essex: Recorded from 16 sites. Bedfords Park. Claybury Park. Piercing Hill calling. Hainault Forest. Harold Hill. Larks Wood. Roding Valley Park. Wanstead Park, a pair.

Herts: Recorded from 18 sites. Amwell NR, a pair. Bricket Wood, drumming. Cassiobury Park, a pair. Croxley Common Moor. Haberdashers' Aske's School, drumming. Hoddesdonpark Wood, drumming. Maple Lodge NR. Smallford.

Middx: Recorded from six sites. Alexandra Park, a pair. Brent Res, drumming. Horsenden Hill (not thought to be breeding). Trent Park, excavating nest hole.

Bucks: Recorded from two sites. Iver Heath.

Kent: Recorded from five sites. Albany Park. Chislehurst Cemetery, excavating nest hole. Joyden's Wood.

Surrey: Recorded from eight sites. Banstead Woods. Berrylands, at nesthole and juvenile. Holmethorpe SP. London Wetland Centre. Richmond Park, three drumming and juveniles. Tooting Common. Wandsworth Common. Wimbledon Common.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Status: scarce passage migrant and occasional rare breeder.

No confirmed reports of breeding for the second year running. Site A in Surrey, where breeding was last proven in 2004, had a singing bird in March; no sightings were reported from Site B in Surrey, where one pair bred in 2007 (belatedly reported in 2008).

Essex: Rainham Marshes, singles on Oct 2nd (HV) and 10th (SBn).

Herts: Berrybushes Wood, one on Feb 27th (CME). Littlebrook Lake, two on Dec 31st (PRr).
Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Sep 24th (JMy, RJW). Staines Moor, one on Oct 25th (DRM).
Tottenham Marshes, one on Mar 3rd (PLT). Wormwood Scrubs, one from Nov 13th-15th (AP *et al*).

Kent: College Farm, seven on Jan 8th and still four until Jan 13th (RBA).

Surrey: Site B, one singing on Mar 28th (DGDL). London Wetland Centre, two on Oct 15th (RK).

In Lond: Regent's Park, two on Sep 18th and Oct 11th, one on Oct 17th (ARD).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant.

As usual, most of the largest gatherings were in autumn and winter months, although it is still a soaring, singing bird that is more of a thrill. What seemed to be a trend downwards in such flocks a few years ago now seems to be reversing, with three-figure counts from six sites this year. The largest were 300 at Colnbrook on Dec 22nd and 238 at Rainham Marshes on Dec 18th. The others were Rushett Farm, which had 100 in Jan, Harlington Fields, with 110 in Feb, Coursers Road, with 157 in Feb, and Redwell Wood Farm, with 280 in Feb.

Closer to Inner London, notable records were 50 at Beddington Farmlands on Dec 25th, 20 at Hackney Marshes on Dec 12th, 22 at Wormwood Scrubs on Feb 22nd and 37 over the London Wetland Centre on Feb 2nd, with 28 on Oct 18th.

In the breeding season, 139 territories (mostly singing males) were reported from 50 sites, with Wormwood Scrubs being the only one in the Inner London boroughs, albeit that the nest was deserted after two weeks. Reports from a number of other sites during the breeding season were not accompanied by any information on the number singing so have been excluded.

Essex: 35 territories at ten sites, including Orsett (4), Grey Goose Farm (6) and Wanstead Flats (16).

Herts: 17 territories at 17 sites: a big drop in territories on last year. Sites included Hatfield Park - Home Park (5), Jersey Farm (3) and Brightwells Farm (3).

Middx: 13 territories at seven sites, including Botany Bay (3) and Hampton Court Park (4). One pair attempted to breed at Wormwood Scrubs, but unfortunately deserted their nest after two weeks.

Kent: 15 territories in four sites; College Farm (3), Crossness (2), New Stables Farm (6), Swanscombe Marshes (4).

Surrey: 59 territories from 12 sites, including Farthing Downs (6), New Addington (8), Riddlesdown (8) and Rushett Farm (8). Closer to Inner London, there were two territories in Richmond Park and one in Beddington Farmlands.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Feb 2nd, Feb 17th, Oct 18th & 25th.
Regent's Park, singles on Oct 9th and Nov 7th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Status: common summer visitor, localised breeder and passage migrant.

The first of the year was a single bird at Belhus Woods CP on Mar 5th. At regularly watched sites, spring passage was greatest from mid-April to mid-May. But in general, migration

was well down on last year, with only 4 sites reporting flocks of 100+, the largest being 200 at Rainham Marshes on May 7th (14 sites and three reports of 300+ in 2008). On June 20th there were 120 at Swanscombe Marshes. The largest gatherings in the post-breeding and autumn passage months were 350 on July 19th at Staines Res, 300 at Amwell NR on Sep 6th and 220 on July 26th at KGV Res. The top two counts in this period last year were 600 and 500. Passage was essentially complete by Sep 20th although there were two records in Oct: one at Alexandra Park on 1st and three at the Arthur Jacob NR on 4th.

Details of all reported breeding colonies are given below (no. of nests in brackets), followed by all records for Inner London. A year of mixed fortunes; on the plus side, the artificial bank at the London Wetland Centre continued to host a large colony and two breeding pairs were reported from within Inner London. On the minus side, there were no reports of breeding from either Walton Res, where a large colony was established last year, or Beddington Farmlands, where breeding is usually recorded (although the artificial sand bank there has been largely ignored), and Middlesex had a very poor year - see below.

Essex: Barking, River Roding (10). Belhus Woods CP (10). KGV Res (7). Mill Wood (4). Walthamstow Res (4). William Girling Res (5).

Middx: Tottenham Marshes (c4 'a disastrous year'). Stanwell Moor - no activity at site used but then abandoned last year.

Surrey: R. Hogsmill at Hogsmill SW (3). London Wetland Centre (66).

In Lond: Rotherhithe (2) and one to four seen at dates in May, June and July. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, three on Apr 9th & 27th, and up to four in May. Regent's Park, one Mar 17th, one Sep 1st. Victoria Park, ten Apr 8th.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Status: common summer visitor and passage migrant, breeding confined to rural areas.

The first of the year was at Beddington Farmlands on Mar 18th. By the end of March, single figure sightings had been reported from another 23 sites. The first general influx was 10-50 at nine sites between Apr 10th and 13th. After a lull of two days, the next wave of migrants was between 16th and 21st. There was much less activity for the rest of April, although on the 27th there were 80 at Amwell NR and on the 28th there were 100 at KGV Res. There were reports of 50 or more on several dates and at several sites in the first half of May; most notably, Hilfield Park Res had 100 on the 4th and Staines Res had 100 on four occasions; on the 13th, Rainham Marshes had 200, the highest spring count.

The last day of August saw autumn passage begin, but really got under way on Sep 6th-8th, with a number of sites recording Swallows by the hundred: Staines Res with 500 had the highest tally. There was then a lull until Sep 16th, when there were 700 at Q. Mary Res. On Sep 19th-20th there was another major movement, with seven sites, including Regent's Park, Wormwood Scrubs and Alexandra Park, reporting three-figure counts and Beddington Farmlands reporting 1,500 over on the 19th. Then passage rapidly tailed off, although 100 passed over Fairlop Waters on Sep 28th. The last of the year was seen at Chafford Hundred on Nov 6th.

Breeding records were down even further than last year, with none at all from Kent and a big reduction from Surrey. All reported nesting records, with numbers of pairs, and all Inner London sightings follow. More nesting records would be welcome.

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley ('nesting'; 15 juveniles). Orsett (1).

Herts: Croxley Green (1). Highfield Farm (1). Stocker's Farm (several). Willows Farm (8 juveniles). Welham Green (3).

Middx: South Lodge Farm (recently fledged juveniles). Stanwell Moor (1+). Totteridge Valley (probable breeding). Trent Park (adult and juvenile).

Surrey: Garsons/Winterhouse Farm (3). Horton CP (1). Rushett Farm (1).

In Lond: Covent Garden, one on Apr 20th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, seen on 11 dates April/May, with a max of 14 on May 4th, and 32 on Sep 20th. Paddington Green, nine on Apr 21st, three on Aug 31st, five on Sep 8th and 50 on 19th. Regent's Park, seen on five dates April/May, with a maximum count of ten, and on six dates in Sep and Oct, with a maximum of 160 on Sep 20th. Rotherhithe, seen on six dates in April/May, with a maximum of eight, and 35 on Sep 19th.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Status: common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first sighting was of one bird over the R. Thames at Portsmouth Rd FB on Mar 17th. Another was seen at Beddington Farmlands on Mar 26th and thereafter until the end of the month, six sites reported a total of ten birds.

Counts in April and May were low compared with last year, with only three of 100 or more - 100 at Beddington Farmlands on April 11th, 100 at Amwell NR on April 12th and 150 at Rainham Marshes on May 13th. In general, numbers tailed off in June, although Amwell NR had 150 on the 6th.

Summer numbers were down on the past few years, with the only notable figures being 100 at Staines Res on July 14th and 200 at Troy Mill Lake on Aug 24th. During September, 15 sites recorded three or four figure counts. The first was Walton Res, with 100 on the 3rd. On 6th, Staines Res had 500-1,000. A very substantial passage was noted from 15th to 24th, with top counts of 2,000 at Staines Res on 17th, 1,500 at Beddington Farmlands on 19th, 900 over Wormwood Scrubs on 21st, 400 over Regent's Park on 20th, 350 at Rainham Marsh on 20th and 300 downed by heavy rain on a roof at Treverex on 15th. Only South Norwood CP reached three figures in October, with 100 on the 2nd. By Oct 6th, passage was essentially complete, with just a few stragglers, and one on Oct 17th bringing up the rear.

The species' breeding status in London is somewhat uncertain. About 240 active nests this year, which is up on last year's 200, although still the second lowest total since 2002. As usual, Essex was the best breeding county, while Herts and Kent were worst. Surrey was well down on last year, perhaps because of a lack of reports from two major sites. The only reports from the Inner London boroughs were from Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns and Finsbury Park. The locations of nests, with number of pairs if known, are given below.

Essex: Crammavill St, Stifford Clays (5). Drake Rd, Chafford Hundred (15 but 5 destroyed by builders in June). Mandeville Court, Chingford (31), Chingford Station area (4). Riverside Flats, Grays (14). St Georges Hospital, Hornchurch (47). Sybourn School (3). Theydon Bois (2). Waltham Abbey (6). Walthamstow FB (24).

Herts: Bricket Wood (probable). Hatfield Aerodrome (1). Hertford (1). Stocker's Farm (1). Stocker's Lake (several).

Middx: Alexandra Park (5+). The Broadway, West Hendon (50-55). Finsbury Park Area (2). Hanworth Rd, Hounslow (3). Stanwell Moor (7).

Kent: Bexley (2). Lullingstone Castle (9).

Surrey: Garsons/Winterhouse Farm (3). Sanderstead (1). Thornhill Rd, Surbiton (1).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (6), at least six occupied nests under the eaves of the French Embassy. Arrivals from 9th April, with between 20 and 30 feeding over the Serpentine from May to September. Paddington Green, one on Apr 12th, 30 on Aug 12th and 50 on Aug 31st. Regent's Park, one on Apr 13th, three on Apr 14th & 27th, 45 on Sep 11th, 400 on Sep 20th and one on Oct 17th. Rotherhithe, seven on Apr 23rd.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

Status: rare vagrant.

The record below is the 14th for London. The last record was a single in 2007 before that there were two in 2003.

Middx: Stoke Newington Res, one on May 9th (MJP).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Status: passage migrant and scarce, seriously decreasing breeding summer visitor.

With five singing birds/territories, this year was similar to recent years and far fewer than ten years ago. There was only one territory reported from Epping Forest, a previous stronghold. All sightings are listed below with the number of territories given in brackets.

Essex: Bedfords Park, one from Sep 7th-10th. Dagenham Chase, one on Apr 26th and Sep 11th. Grays, one on Aug 26th. Ingrebourne Valley, three on Sep 6th. Long Running, one from Apr 30th to May 25th. Mar Dyke Valley, one on Sep 11th. Netherhouse Farm (2). Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 28th, July 31st, Aug 25th, Sep 8th, Oct 12th & 13th, with two on Sep 11th. Tylers Common, one on Aug 29th and Sep 3rd. Wanstead Flats, singles on Apr 25th, Aug 16th, 23rd & 26th, Sep 2nd, 5th, 12th, 13th & 19th, with two on Aug 29th.

Herts: Brookmans Park, one Aug 31st. Hatfield Aerodrome, one June 13th & 21st.

Middx: Alexandra Park, singles on May 3rd, Aug 25th, Sep 3rd, 5th & 28th. Brent Res, one on Sep 5th. Tottenham Marshes, one on Sep 8th. Totteridge Valley, one on Apr 26th. Trent Park, one on Aug 30th. Vicarage Farm, one on May 6th. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Aug 3rd, two on Aug 26th, one on Sep 4th and two on Sep 9th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, one on Sep 5th. Horton GP, one on Sep 12th and two on 17th. Q. Mother Res, one on May 14th. Wraybury GP, singles on Aug 17th and Sep 1st.

Kent: Crossness, one on Apr 13th - the first of the year - and one on Apr 18th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Apr 20th, one on Aug 23rd, two on Sep 3rd, 5th & 12th, one on 19th. London Wetland Centre, singles on Apr 15th & 23rd, Aug 20th & Aug 24th. Riddlesdown, one on Sep 11th. Wimbledon Common, one on Oct 14th, the last of the year.

In Lond: Regent's Park, singles on Aug 18th, Sep 5th, 7th & 11th.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor, localised breeder.

A relatively poor first winter period, with only three gatherings of more than 50 birds: 51 at Hunsdon Meads in Jan, 50 at Horton GP in Feb and 52 at Rainham Marshes in Feb.

Spring passage was weak with, for example, a maximum of only 30 at London Wetland Centre and 46 at Beddington Farmlands.

Autumn passage was strongest towards the end of Sep, as usual, with 100 over Wormwood Scrubs on Sep 21st, 100 at Staines Moor on Sep 26th, 120 at KGV Res on Sep 27th and 115 on Sep 29th. Seven other sites reported 50+ in the same period. 100 birds were seen at KGV I on Oct 11th and the same number at Q. Mary Res on Oct 18th. The peak number at Rainham Marshes this year was 73 on Oct 30th.

Numbers during the second winter period were about average, with the highest counts being 70 at Cole Green on Nov 6th, 90 at Rye Meads RSPB on Nov 7th, 75 at Q. Mary Res on Dec 18th and 80 at Beddington Farmlands on Dec 20th.

Like last year, at first sight, this was a very poor year for breeding with only c30 pairs (c25 last year but 78 in 2007 and c145 in 2005 and 2006) but like last year there were no breeding records from two major sites of previous years: Rainham Marshes and Ingrebourne Valley. It was pleasing, after last year's break, again to have breeding records from Wormwood Scrubs, now the closest breeding site to the centre of London. Records of all breeding/territories (number of pairs in brackets) and all Inner London records are given below.

Essex: Wanstead Flats (7).

Herts: Beech Farm GP (1). Elstree Aerodrome (1). Leavesden Green (2). Moor Mill (1).

Middx: Hampton Court Park (1). Lake Farm CP (2). Wormwood Scrubs (5).

Kent: Crossness (3).

Surrey: Hersham GP (2). Riddlesdown (6).

In Lond: Battersea Power Station, two on Mar 22nd, nine on Sep 27th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 2nd & 11th, Feb 11th and Mar 16th. Five on Sep 17th, 18 on Sep 20th, 13 on Oct 11th & Oct 18th, one on Oct 27th, two on Oct 29th, and one on Nov 9th & 17th. Paddington Green, two on Sep 15th, eight on Sep 20th, 12 on Nov 5th. Regent's Park, 11 on Apr 13th, two on Apr 14th, one on May 3rd, between three and ten on eight dates in Sep, 12 on Oct 9th, six on Oct 11th and eight on Oct 17th. Rotherhithe, one on Dec 15th & 23rd.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Status: passage migrant and winter visitor.

Reported on the ground from 23 'wet' sites and as a fly-over from a few 'dry' sites. Rainham Marshes continues to be far and away the best wintering site, with Swanscombe Marshes a poor second. It would be safe to say that this species is resident at Rainham from October to March. Monthly maximums are shown in the table.

| Rock Pipit | Jan | Feb | Mar | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Rainham | 10 | 11 | 5 | 24 | 14 | 13 |
| Swanscombe | 5 | 7 | - | 1 | - | - |

Essex: Creekmouth, Barking, one on Nov 30th, then two on Dec 19th & 27th. Fairlop Waters, two on Oct 4th. KGV Res, three on Oct 17th and one on 23rd. Walthamstow Res, one on Oct 15th & 25th. West Thurrock Marshes, three on Jan 11th, then singles on Feb 2nd, Mar 8th and Dec 18th.



Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus* is best looked for on the Lower Thames Marshes, but birds sometimes also appear on the larger reservoirs. This individual was at King George VI Reservoir on 10 October. (Andrew Moon)

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, singles on Sep 20th & 26th and Oct 22nd.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Oct 28th. Brent Res, one on Apr 4th. Isle of Dogs, one on Oct 7th. KGVI Res one on Sep 19th, Oct 4th & 6th, three on Oct 7th, five on 10th & 11th. Staines Res, singles on Sep 19th & 28th and Oct 5th. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Feb 8th.

Bucks: Horton GP, one on Oct 17th. Q. Mother Res, one on Sep 20th and Oct 3rd, two on Oct 8th, one on 14th, four on 15th, two on 18th, three on 19th and one on 29th.

Kent: Crayford Marsh, one on Oct 30th. Crossness, recorded from Jan 1st to 16th, with max of three on 1st. One on Sep 29th, Oct 15th, 17th & 25th, two Oct 31st and Dec 5th, then one on Dec 16th. R. Thames, Belvedere, one on Oct 29th, Dec 10th. R. Thames, Dartford, one on Jan 19th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on Oct 18th, 20th & 21st. London Wetland Centre, singles on Feb 25th and Mar 15th, then two on Apr 13th, one to three birds from Sep 22nd to Nov 2nd, two on Dec 20th. QE II Res, one on Sep 14th and Oct 3rd. Walton Res, singles on Mar 22nd, Apr 3rd and Oct 6th.

In Lond: Regent's Park, single on Oct 17th.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Status: regular but localised winter visitor and passage migrant.

Monthly peak counts for the five most productive sites are shown in the table. Records from other sites are listed in the notes below.

| Water Pipit | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------|----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Essex | Rainham Marshes | 3 | 5 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Middx | KGVI Res | 4 | 3 | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| | Staines Moor | 3 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Surrey | Beddington Farmlands | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| | Wetland Centre | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 2 |

Essex: Fairlop Waters, one on Mar 30th. Walthamstow Res, one on Apr 8th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Oct 30th. Rye Meads RSPB, one on Jan 3rd, four on Jan 17th, three on Jan 31st, two on Feb 7th, one on Mar 15th & 28th. In October, singles were recorded on the 17th, 18th & 24th, followed by two on Nov 6th, and then singles on Nov 14th, 21st & 28th, and Dec 5th & 31st.

Middx: Brent Res, one on Nov 7th. Staines Res, one on Jan 1st, one on Mar 6th, two on Mar 20th, one on Mar 21st & 22nd, two on Mar 29th, and Dec 23rd. Stoke Newington Res, one on Apr 13th. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Nov 5th. Wraysbury Res, one on Oct 25th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, singles on Oct 23rd and Dec 9th. Crossness, singles on two dates in Jan, one in Feb, three in Oct, two in Nov and four in Dec. Greenhithe, two on Jan 22nd. R. Thames, Belvedere, one on Oct 29th. Swanscombe Marshes, singles on Jan 3rd and Mar 14th.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Status: common passage migrant and decreasing, now scarce, breeder.

The only March record was of a single bird at the London Wetland Centre on the 29th. Then eight sites recorded 1-3 birds in the first week of April. Spring passage, from the start of April to mid-May, was fairly typical of recent years with only two sites recording double-figure flocks. Yellow Wagtail still hangs on as a breeding species in the outer LNHS area, with two reports of definite breeding this year in Essex, although none in Hertfordshire, which usually has a pair or two. As usual, autumn passage, which was largely from the last week in August to the third week in September, was better and five sites produced counts of c20-40 birds, again fairly typical of recent years. October delivered the last three records of the year, with one bird at Woodoaks Farm on the 1st, two at Rainham Marshes on the 2nd and one at Q. Mother Res from the 29th to the 31st.

The table below shows the maximum count at sites where birds were seen on at least ten occasions.

Yellow Wagtail (>10)

| Site | Occasions seen | Maximum count | Date |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Rainham Marshes | 46 | 40 | Sep 20th |
| Beddington | 32 | 15 | Apr 17th |
| Wetland Centre | 26 | 9 | Apr 13th & 20th |
| Tyttenhanger GP | 22 | 39 | Aug 31st |
| Q. Mother Res | 17 | 15 | Aug 30th |
| Staines Res | 17 | 7 | Sep 5th |
| Fairlop Waters | 11 | 5 | Sep 5th & 21st |
| Staines Moor | 11 | 31 | Sep 12th |

Breeding records (no. of pairs in brackets), larger counts (ten or more in outer areas, three or more in more central areas and all Inner London records follow.

Essex: Bulphan (1). Hastingwood (1). Holyfield Hall Farm ten on Sep 9th. Rainham Marshes, 11 on Aug 24th, 35 on Sep 19th, 40 on Sep 20th. Wanstead Flats, ten on Sep 5th. West Hórndon (3).

Herts: Amwell NR, 11 on Sep 4th. London Colney, 19 on Sep 22nd. Tyttenhanger Farm, 10-39 on six dates between Aug 28th and Sep 22nd. Woodoaks Farm, 12 on Aug 29th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Aug 3rd, eight on 30th. Brent Res, maximum of three on two dates in Apr, two in May, one in July, one in Aug and two in Sep. Isle of Dogs, one on Aug 30th. Wormwood Scrubs, maximum of two on four dates in Aug and four in Sep. KGV Res, 12 on Sep 8th. South Lodge Farm, 11 on Sep 9th, 18 on 10th. Staines Moor, 17 on Sep 9th, 31 on 12th, 24 on 14th, 20 on 16th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, probable family group of six on Sep 24th. Q. Mother Res, 15 on Aug 30th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, 11 on Sep 11th.

Surrey: Wimbledon Common, one on Sep 10th. Beddington Farmlands, 15 on Apr 17th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Apr 22nd. Paddington Green, singles on Aug 29th, Sep 15th & 20th. Regent's Park, singles on Apr 13th, Sep 10th & 11th.

In addition to the above records, there were three reports of possible **Blue-headed Wagtails** *Motacilla flava flava*.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Apr 27th (AT) and one on May 7th (RSPB).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on May 20th (RG).

Furthermore, there was one report of a **Grey-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava thunbergi*.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on May 30th (MMe).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant.

A total of 43 records of breeding or suspected breeding from 37 sites. Doubtless more breeding would be recorded if others were to follow the example of the observer (DCo) who annually walks a large section of one river (Wandle) during the breeding season. The notes below give breeding data (the no. of pairs or territories in brackets), counts of five or more birds and all Inner London records. Blackheath Village and Paddington Green were the only sites of breeding noted within the Inner London boroughs.

Essex: River Roding, Barking (1). Creekmouth, Barking, six on Sep 26th, nine on Oct 10th, five on Dec 27th. KGV Res, seven on Jan 22nd, five on Mar 2nd. Rainham Marshes, five on Sep 28th and on Oct 13th. Walthamstow FB (1). Walthamstow Res (1).

Herts: Cassiobury Park, five on Nov 4th & 13th. The Grove Mill (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). Little Berkhamsted (1). Park Street, St Albans (1). Radlett (1). Rye Meads (3) and five or more on 16 dates spread over all months other than Nov and Dec, with a maximum of 17 on June 27th. Stocker's Farm (1). Tyttenhanger GP (1). Verulamium Park (1). Watford (2). Willows Farm (1).

Middx: Alexandra Park (1). Brent Res (1). Tottenham Marshes (1). Town Park, Enfield (1).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Jan 4th, one on Apr 12th, two on Oct 11th.

Kent: Blackheath Village (1). Crossness (1) giving a family of six on Aug 29th. Ladywell

Fields (1). Lamorbey Park (1). Lullingstone (1). Ravensbourne River, Catford (1). Westerham (1).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (1) and six to eight on ten dates, with a maximum of eight on Oct 11th. Berrylands (1). Grand Union Canal, Hayes (1). KGVI Res (1). Raynes Park, Merton (1). R. Thames, Teddington Lock to Eel Pie (1) giving a family of five on May 25th. R. Wandle, Butter Hill to Morden Hall Park (4). R. Wandle, Carshalton to Wandsworth, 19 on Dec 28th. Sanderstead Pond (1). Trevereux (1). Walton Res (1). Wimbledon Common (1).

In Lond: Paddington Green (1). Camley St Natural Park, one on June 3rd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 13 sightings between Jan and 14th May, a pair with a juvenile on 14th June. Paddington Green, two on Mar 30th, one on Apr 1st, 10th, 12th & 19th, two on June 21st & 27th. Vauxhall, two on June 27th. Westminster, one on Jan 15th.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Status: common breeding resident and winter visitor.

Although commonly seen throughout the LNHS area, and notable for its large urban roosts, Pied Wagtail breeding records are fewer than those of the much less common Grey Wagtail. Thankfully, breeding records this year were more up on the past two years (25 cf 16 and 13), which is a step in the right direction; more records would be welcome.

Only two large (100+) winter roosts this year compared with four last year, which in

*Ornamental plantings around retail parks and supermarkets are well known for attracting Waxwings *Bombus garrulus* in winter, and those at Lakeside Thurrock again delivered the species in January. (Les Harrison)*



turn was the equal lowest of the past eight years. It remains unclear whether this represents a genuine trend rather than the vagaries of recorders. A summary of breeding records, counts of 40+, including maximum roost size, together with all Inner London records is given below.

Essex: Creekmouth, Barking, 50 on Dec 19th. Fairlop Waters, 70 on Mar 30th and 40 on Apr 1st. Grays, 50 on Oct 5th. Roding Valley Park, 42 on Apr 2nd.

Herts: Salisbury Hall Farm, 40 on July 30th. Watford, 100 roosting on Nov 26th.

Middx: Chase Farm Hospital, Enfield, 40 roosting on Feb 26th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 55 on Nov 1st. East Croydon Station, 150-200 roosting on Jan 24th and 100 on Dec 4th. Holmethorpe SP, 185 on Jan 31st. Purley, 60 roosting on Jan 29th. High St, Sutton, 80 roosting on Dec 29th. Broadway, Tolworth, 80 roosting on Nov 27th.

In Lond: Charing Cross area, one on Mar 17th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, five on Jan 8th, 22 on Sep 17th, 12 on Nov 11th. Victoria, one on Nov 9th.

White Wagtail *M. a. alba*

Status: passage migrant, more commonly seen in spring than in autumn.

This year there were 89 sightings, about the same as last year, of which 59 were between March and May. However, a good number of these reports were probably of the same bird at the same site on consecutive or near consecutive days. The highest count was six at KGV Res on April 12th. *

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Status: uncommon but sometimes numerous irruptive visitor.

Those hoping for a Waxwing irruption were to be rather disappointed at the start of the year, with sightings from only 17 localities; there were no reports at the end of the year.

Essex: Chafford Hundred, 14-30 from Feb 22nd to Apr 11th. Grays, 10-15 from Feb 25th to Mar 12th. Havering Plain, nine on Feb 25th. Hornchurch, two on Jan 24th. Lakeside Shopping Centre, 12-14 from Jan 28th to Feb 15th. Mar Dyke Valley, one on Mar 11th. Romford, two on Jan 18th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 12 on Mar 28th. Oxhey, one in a garden on Jan 11th.

Kent: Bexley, five on Jan 22nd, eight on Jan 23rd. Bexleyheath, three on Mar 12th. Bluewater Shopping Centre, 25 on Mar 31st, reducing gradually in number to two on Apr 29th. Darent Valley Hospital, seven on Feb 3rd and eight on 4th, (including a bird, colour ringed at Aberdeen on Nov 11th 2008). Dunton Green, three on Feb 20th. Greenhithe, 11 on Feb 21st. Ruxley, eight on Jan 25th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Jan 4th. Croydon, one on Jan 19th. Whyteleafe, 12 on Jan 10th 'stayed for several days'.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Status: abundant breeding resident with influxes in autumn and winter.

We receive very few records of this diminutive, but noisy, bird so more records would be welcome. From the evidence we have it appears to continue to maintain a healthy population in a variety of habitats wherever there is sufficient low cover. BBS data suggests

that it has increased in the London Area since 1994, though with a slight decline since 2005. Local patch breeding counts and regular monthly counts would help us to substantiate or refute this trend.

The highest counts of singing males/territories (nos. in brackets) at sites where ten or more were found are given, followed by some of the higher counts and other records of interest.

Essex: Belhus Woods (19). Grays Chalk Pit (10). Mar Dyke Valley (12). Rainham Marshes (18).

Herts: Batchworth Lake nr Rickmansworth (23). Rye Meads nr Hoddesdon (66).

Middx: Horsenden Hill (50+). Wanstead Flats, 30 on Nov 10th. Wormwood Scrubs (10+).

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, 30 on Mar 18th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (15). Barwell Court Farm (12). Beddington Farmlands (17), 38 on Mar 1st. Holmethorpe SP, 47 on Dec 1st. London Wetland Centre, 33 on June 3rd. Molesey Heath (18). The Ledges, Esher (15). Wandsworth Common (12). West End Common (18).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace (5). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, nested. St James's Park (3).

Dunnock Prunella modularis

Status: abundant breeding resident.

Gardens, woodland edges, scrub and hedgerows all provide suitable habitat for the Dunnock, which is found commonly throughout the London Area. Despite a comment from one contributor that it is a 'common breeding resident', we receive very few records of this bird. Local patch breeding counts, or counts of singing birds and regular monthly counts would be very welcome. Compared to Wrens and Robins, there are possibly fewer Dunnocks seen in gardens.

The records below give counts of singing males/territories (figs in brackets), together with some of the higher counts.

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley (13).

Herts: Rye Meads RSPB (38).

Middx: Horsenden Hill (25-30). Wormwood Scrubs (6).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 29 on Feb 1st. Holmethorpe SP, 39 on Dec 1st. Molesey Heath (12).

Robin Erithacus rubecula

Status: abundant breeding resident with influxes in autumn and winter.

Robins are likely to be seen on most bird watching trips, as well as most gardens, but as with other common birds we receive far too few records. Counts of singing birds during the breeding season and regular monthly counts would all be very welcome.

Records of breeding pairs/singing males (numbers in brackets) are given below with some high counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (22). Grays Chalk Pit (13). Lion Gorge (10). Mar Dyke Valley (17). Rainham Marshes, 23 on Feb 3rd. Wanstead Park, 20 on Dec 5th. West Ham Park, 13 on Mar 15th.

Herts: Batchworth Lake (15). Rye Meads RSPB (35).

Middx: Horsenden Hill (60+).

Kent: Dasons Park, 29 on Mar 31st. Joyden's Wood, 25 on Apr 14th. Knockholt Pound, 28 on Sep 25th. Sevenoaks WR, 49 on Sep 26th. Sutton at Hone, 24 Jan 6th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (15). Beddington Farmlands, 41 on Mar 1st and 38 on Dec 1st. Holmethorpe SP, 52 on Dec 1st. London Wetland Centre, 46 on Oct 21st. Molesey Heath (15). Prince's Coverts (13). The Ledges, Esher (12). West End Common (23).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (9-10). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (15). St James's Park (1).

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Status: breeding summer visitor in small numbers, scarce passage migrant.

Reports came from 28 sites, with the first being recorded on the very early date of Mar 13th. The rest followed from Apr 8th. About 17 territories were actually established, a worrying decrease on last year's total of 31. The Lee Valley remains the stronghold for this species. A summary of territories (numbers in brackets) and migrants are given below. Essex: Connaught Water, one Apr 15th. Epping Forest (1). Fishers Green (9). Hangman's Wood, male May 1st. Ingrebourne Valley, male Apr 19th. Lippitts Hill (2). Mar Dyke Valley, male May 4th. Mayesbrook Park, singing bird Apr 16th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Apr 29th. Beech Farm GP, one on June 11th. Cheshunt GPs (3). Coopers Green Lane, bird singing on June 2nd & 3rd. Hatfield Park, bird singing briefly on Mar 15th. Rye Meads RSPB, one on Aug 14th. Symondshyde Great Wood (1). Woodside, bird singing briefly on Apr 15th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Sep 7th. Brent Res, one on Sep 5th. Lake Farm CP, singing bird on Apr 17th. Queen Mary GP, singing male on Apr 18th.

Kent: College Farm (1). Dartford Marshes, one on Apr 26th. Scadbury Park, singing bird on May 2nd. St Mary's Church, Bexley, singing bird on May 12th, with two singing birds on May 21st.

Surrey: Bookham Common, singing bird on Apr 29th. London Wetland Centre, one on Sep 20th. Mortlake Cemetery, singing bird on May 21st.

In Lond: Rotherhithe, singing bird on May 20th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Status: breeding summer visitor, passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers.

Much-celebrated by urban naturalists, this species was recorded at 37 sites this year, (29 in 2008) and the number of site records has been increasing every year since 2006. Breeding was not confirmed at any site, but pairs or singing males were recorded in breeding season at 12 sites, two outside Inner London. This is a lot more than in recent years, and may suggest an increase in the breeding population. These records are summarised in the table; all other records are given below.

Black Redstart

| | Pairs proved breeding | Other pairs present | Additional singing males |
|---------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Kent | - | - | 1 |
| Surrey | - | 1 | - |
| In Lond | - | - | 10 |

- Essex:** Barking Bay, two on Dec 8th. Chafford Hundred, one on Dec 13th. Creekmouth, Barking, one on Jan 14th. KGV Res, two on Nov 15th. Mar Dyke Valley, one on Jan 27th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Jan 4th and Oct 17th.
- Herts:** Beech Farm GP, one on Mar 20th. Hertford, one in garden on Mar 25th. Hilfield Park Res, one on May 16th. Leavesden Green, one on Mar 30th. Rye Meads RSPB, singles on Mar 17th & 18th and Nov 14th. Woodoaks Farm, first-winter male, singing Apr 3rd-5th, with another on Nov 26th.
- Middx:** Alexandra Park, one on Dec 12th. Chiswick, single on May 8th. East India Dock Basin, one present between Jan 1st and Feb 1st, with two birds recorded on Jan 8th and one on Dec 31st. Isle of Dogs, one on June 27th. KGVI Res, one on Dec 20th. Q. Mary Res, one on Nov 21st. Ridding Lane OS, one on May 1st. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Apr 24th.
- Bucks:** Q. Mother Res, one on at least four dates between Oct 14th and Nov 9th.
- Kent:** Crossness, one on Apr 11th, two on Oct 15th and one on Nov 30th. R. Thames, Belvedere, singles Mar 30th and Dec 5th.
- Surrey:** London Wetland Centre, singles on Mar 16th & 31st.
- In Lond:** Pedley Street E1, one on Dec 1st. Regent's Street, one on Nov 30th.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Status: passage migrant.

This year's total of 12 records in spring was similar to 15 last year. A healthy autumn passage involved about 65 birds (77 in 2007); a third of these were found at two Middx sites by one diligent observer with the time to make regular patch visits. The first sightings were on April 6th at Brockley and Crossness. There was an interesting record of a juvenile ringed at Crossness on July 5th. The main autumn migration really commenced in late August and the last bird was at Crayford Marshes on Oct 14th.

- Essex:** Bedfords Park, singles on Aug 27th and from Sep 6th-8th. Dagenham Chase, one on Aug 29th. Fairlop Waters, singles on Sep 7th, 8th & 17th. Fen Lane, Orsett, one on Sep 7th. Havering-atte-Bower, one on Aug 30th. Hornchurch CP, one on Sep 11th. Ingrebourne Valley, two on both Aug 23rd and Sep 6th. KGV Res, one on Sep 6th. Netherhouse Farm, one on Sep 10th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 8th, Aug 6th, 11th and Sep 11th. Roding Valley, one on Apr 7th. Sewardstone Marsh, one on Sep 17th. Upminster, one on Aug 13th. Wanstead Flats, two Aug 25th, three on 29th and one on 31st; two on Sep 1st and singles on 2nd, 5th & 20th.
- Herts:** Merry Hill, three on Aug 29th and one on 30th. Munden Estate, Watford, one on Sep 12th. Newgate Street, one on Sep 13th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Sep 14th. Willows Farm, one on Sep 14th.
- Middx:** Alexandra Park, juvenile bird from Aug 29th until Sep 1st, with male on Sep 7th. Brent Res, one on Aug 27th and on Sep 2nd. Horsenden Hill, singles on Aug 31st and Sep 26th. Lake Farm CP, one Sep 10th-12th. Park Farm, Enfield, one on Aug 22nd, with another on Sep 12th. Springfield Park, one on Sep 3rd, 9th & 10th. Stoke Newington Res, one on Sep 16th. Trent Park, singles on Aug 20th & 21st, two on 22nd, and then singles on 24th, 26th, 27th, 29th, 31st and Sep 3rd. Vicarage Farm, one on Aug 23rd. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Sep 11th and two on 25th.

Bucks: Arthur Jacob NR, singles on Sep 10th, 11th & 24th. Colnbrook, singles on Sep 18th & 25th.

Kent: Brockley, singles on Apr 6th and May 19th. Crayford Marshes, one on Oct 14th. Crossness, two on Apr 6th and a juvenile trapped and ringed on July 5th. Greenwich Peninsular Ecology Park, one on Sep 5th. R. Thames Belvedere, one on Sep 21st. Blackhall Lane, Sevenoaks, two on May 25th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Sep 13th. Esher Common, one on May 1st, with a singing male on 23rd. Holmethorpe SP, singles on Sep 16th & 20th. London Wetland Centre, one on Sep 4th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 23rd.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Status: regular passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor.

There were more spring sightings this year, with around 57 records (32 last year). Autumn passage was also better than last year, with about 447 sightings (412 last year). The first bird of the spring was at London Wetland Centre on Apr 18th and the last of autumn at Crossness on Oct 18th. Spring passage peaked in late April and early May, with autumn peaks in late August, the first nine days of September, and Sep 19th. Counts were, as usual, higher in the autumn with 13 being the maximum, at Rainham Marshes on Sep 2nd.

There continue to be regular sightings at suitable habitats within the built-up area. These included Tottenham Marshes, Wanstead Flats (counts of 12 in late August), and Wormwood Scrubs. Details below for the main sites.

Essex: Bedfords Park, three on Sep 6th. Dagenham Chase, four on Sep 6th. Fairlop Waters, recorded on 13 dates (4 spring, 9 autumn), with a maximum four on Sep 8th. Ingrebourne Valley, three on Sep 4th & 6th. KGV Res, five on Sep 6th. Rainham Marshes, recorded on 30 dates (5 spring, 25 autumn), with at least three individuals seen on 15 dates, including eight on Aug 17th, 13 on Sep 2nd, ten on Sep 8th and eight on Sep 9th & 12th. Tylers Common, maximum of four on Aug 31st. Wanstead Flats, recorded on 15 dates (1 spring, 14 autumn), with at least three individuals seen on seven dates, including 12 on Aug 29th and 11 on Aug 31st.

Herts: Beech Farm GP, one Aug 23rd, then two Sep 10th & 19th, with one on 20th. Hatfield Aerodrome, two on Sep 18th, then four on 20th. Merry Hill, four on Aug 29th. Rye Meads RSPB, one on Sep 5th, two on 6th, then three on 9th. Tyttenhanger GP, recorded on nine dates from Aug 29th to Sep 18th, max three on Sep 8th. Willows Farm, one on Sep 4th, three on 6th, and two on 7th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, recorded on 11 dates (2 spring, 9 autumn). Lake Farm CP, recorded on nine dates (1 spring, 8 autumn). Staines Moor, recorded on 13 dates (2 spring, 11 autumn). Tottenham Marshes, recorded on nine dates (1 spring, 8 autumn), maximum of six on Sep 2nd. Trent Park, three on Sep 5th. Vicarage Farm, recorded on 16 dates (3 spring, 13 autumn), with a maximum of five on Aug 25th. Wormwood Scrubs, recorded on eight dates (4 spring, 4 autumn), with a maximum of six on Sep 18th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, three on May 3rd. Crossness, recorded on 23 dates (4 spring, 19 autumn), with a maximum of four on Sep 22nd. Dartford Marshes, three on Sep 5th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, three on Sep 20th. London Wetland Centre, recorded on 14 dates (9 spring, 5 autumn).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Sep 17th. Regent's Park, two on Sep 10th, one on 18th.

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Status: localised breeding resident, regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were only breeding records of single pairs from three sites this year, well down on the nine or ten pairs which bred at seven sites in 2008. There was only one pair at Richmond Park where four pairs bred last year, and no reports from Bushy Heath. So this year, for most of the London Area the Stonechat was a passage/winter visitor. In Bucks and Herts numbers were lower than last year; taken together with the decline in breeding, this is a worrying sign. Highest counts in the first part of the year were 13 at Crossness, and in the second part of the year, 11 at Rainham Marshes and Staines Moor. All breeding records (no. of pairs in brackets) followed by some of the highest counts are given below.

Essex: Netherhouse Farm, five on Nov 5th. Rainham Marshes (1), five or more birds recorded on 16 dates, with a maximum of 11 on Nov 11th.

Herts: Numbers lower than in 2008 with two being the max counts at most sites. Beech Farm GP, three on Jan 29th and Oct 11th. Hatfield Aerodrome, three on Sep 25th and Oct 23rd, four on Nov 20th. Rye Meads RSPB, three on Oct 13th.

Middx: Staines Moor, five or more birds recorded on 12 dates, with a maximum of 11 birds on Oct 10th. Wormwood Scrubs, six birds on Mar 9th.

Bucks: Numbers lower than in 2008, with max counts of two at Colnbrook on Feb 11th and Oct 14th; and at Shreding Green on Nov 8th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, five plus birds recorded on 10 dates, with maximum of ten birds seen on three dates. Crossness (1), five or more birds recorded on four dates, with a maximum of 13 on Feb 28th. Swanscombe Marshes, five birds on Aug 2nd.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, five or more birds recorded on three dates, with a maximum of eight seen on Oct 10th. Richmond Park (1).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, male on Apr 15th.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Status: common passage migrant and very occasional breeding visitor.

For many, the arrival of the Wheatear marks the start of spring migration. The first this year was at East India Dock Basin on Mar 1st, with another at the London Wetland Centre the next day. Wider arrival followed from Mar 14th. The highest count was nine at Q. Mother Res on May 7th, and there were few counts over four. Looking at records in recent years, lower spring passage numbers appear to be a continuing trend. Peak passage was from Apr 11th to 26th, although the largest count was 38 on May 7th. The last was at Crossness on May 29th.

Return passage began on July 31st, with peaks on Aug 29th, and Sep 5th. The last of the year were at Crossness and Rainham Marshes on Oct 26th.

Higher counts and a summary of all records for inner city sites are given.

Essex: Fairlop Waters, four on Apr 13th and Sep 5th. Ingrebourne Valley, three on Mar 15th and Apr 7th. KGV Res, four on Sep 6th. Rainham Marshes, eight on Apr 19th and six on Sep 22nd. Walthamstow Res, five on Apr 12th and four on Sep 20th. Wanstead Flats, eight on Aug 29th.

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, three on Aug 29th and Sep 6th. Tyttenhanger GP, four on May 7th & 9th, and on Aug 29th.

Middx: Kempton NR, three on May 7th and Aug 6th. KGVI Res, three on Apr 22nd and four on Sep 20th, as well as an early autumn record on July 31st. Lake Farm CP, three on Aug 29th. Staines Moor, four on Apr 13th. Staines Res, five on Sep 16th. Trent Park, three on Mar 30th. Wormwood Scrubs, three on Apr 25th. Wraysbury Res, four on Aug 31st.

Bucks: Colnbrook, three on Sep 5th. Q. Mother Res, nine on May 7th and six on Sep 5th.

Kent: Crossness, five on May 7th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, six on Apr 11th, 17th & 20th, and on Sep 6th. Epsom Downs, four on Apr 18th. London Wetland Centre, five on Apr 20th. QE II Res, eight on May 7th. Walton Res, three on Apr 18th.

In Lond: Albert Embankment SE1, one on Apr 27th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Apr 20th and Aug 19th. Peckham Rye, one on Sep 20th. Regent's Park, male bird on Apr 14th, two on May 3rd, and one on Sep 9th & 10th.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Status: regular passage migrant, but never common.

This wary and beautiful thrush is always a prized find during migration, but this year there were a lot fewer records than last year. It was a very poor spring showing with only 16 birds (44 in 2008), although the 14 autumn records were more normal. There were no records this year from Bucks or Herts. The first were on Apr 6th but most arrived between Apr 14th and 19th. The first autumn birds were on Oct 5th and the last on Nov 10th.

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley, male on Oct 26th. Rainham Marshes, singles on Apr 10th, 12th & 19th and Oct 5th, 14th, 15th & 17th. Wanstead Flats, singles on Apr 14th, 15th & 19th and Oct 3rd.

Middx: Alexandra Park, male on Oct 15th. Isle of Dogs, singles on Apr 7th & 14th. Springfield Park, one on Nov 7th. Staines Moor one on Nov 8th. Wormwood Scrubs, singles on Oct 22nd & 28th, and three birds present on 29th, with up to two birds remaining until Nov 8th.

Kent: Crossness, first-winter bird on Oct 17th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one Apr 6th, 17th & 19th and Oct 11th & 29th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, male bird on Apr 10th. Regent's Park, singles on Apr 28th, Oct 17th & 18th and Nov 10th.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Status: abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Considered by some to sing more sweetly than the Nightingale, the Blackbird is one of our commonest birds from the city centre to the rural fringe, with continental influxes in autumn and winter. According to the BBS, numbers in the London region have fallen



*Two very different European Stonechats *Saxicola rubicola* at Rainham Marshes RSPB: a typical female (above) and a rare aberrant individual which appeared monochrome, lacking any warm pigments. (Dominic Mitchell and Les Harrison)*



by 26% since 1994. Evidence from the Royal Parks this year is of breeding numbers well down and a continuing decline in numbers. More comments on the status of Blackbirds at other sites would be very welcome.

The notes record territories/singing males (no. in brackets). Some of the highest wintering and passage counts are also listed.

Essex: Hangman's Wood (4). West Ham Park, maximum of 41 on June 19th.

Herts: Rye Meads RSPB (24).

Middx: Wormwood Scrubs (20).

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 45 on Dec 24th. Sevenoaks WR, maximum count was 46 on Dec 16th. Sutton at Hone, 42 on Jan 6th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (12). Beddington Farmlands (17), with maximum count of 71 on Nov 1st. Esher Common (3). Holmethorpe SP, 61 on Dec 1st. Molesey Heath (15). Prince's Coverts (12). The Ledges, Esher (8). West End Common (11).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gardens (3). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (9); 20+ counted on Feb 6th and Dec 14th. Vauxhall Park, 11 broods observed.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Status: regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Winter and migratory counts of this noisy thrush were similar to last year, with 17 flocks of 200+ (20 in 2008). The last of the first winter period was one at Mudchute Farm on Apr 22nd; the first in autumn were 20 at the London Wetland centre on Oct 4th. This year large flocks were seen from the end of January and early February, and then from the end of November, both in response to cold weather. There was little evidence of large migration in the autumn this year apart from a few high counts in early November.

The notes below list peak counts, with lower counts included for sites within the London boroughs and closer to the city centre.

Essex: Belhus Wood CP, 247 on Feb 22nd, 150 on Nov 17th. Berwick Farm, c200 on Dec 11th. Fairlop Waters, c150 on Dec 20th. Green Lane, Orsett, 254 on Dec 2nd. Ingrebourne Valley, c300 on Dec 11th. Mill Lane, Orsett, c300 on Feb 10th and c450 on Feb 23rd. Rainham Marshes, c200 on Feb 3rd & 4th, c400 on Dec 26th, c250 on Dec 27th, c150 on Dec 28th. Wanstead Flats, c100 on Nov 15th.

Herts: Balls Wood, c150 on Feb 13th. Hampermill Lake, 180 on Feb 17th. Hertford, c300 on Feb 11th. Rye Meads RSPB, 362 on Feb 7th. Woodoaks Farm, c200 on Nov 30th, 320 on Dec 5th, c200 on Dec 6th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 118 on Nov 15th. Brent Res 528 on Feb 7th, 158 on Nov 5th and 173 on Dec 23rd. Hackney Marshes, c100 on Feb 7th. Harlington Fields, c300 on Feb 7th. Horsenden Hill, 160 on Feb 7th. Springfield Park, 131 on Nov 5th. Staines Moor, c150 on Feb 7th. Stoke Newington Res, c650 on Dec 23rd. Totteridge Valley, 325 on Feb 12th. Wormwood Scrubs, c130 on Oct 28th and 144 on Dec 23rd.

Bucks: Colnbrook, c200 on Feb 7th and Dec 9th. Q. Mother Res, c300 on Dec 27th.

Kent: Eynsford, 260 on Jan 31st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 330 on Nov 15th. Holmethorpe SP, 150 on Feb 17th & 28th. London Wetland Centre, 316 on Feb 2nd, 140 on Feb 8th, 150 on Feb 9th, 195 on Feb 10th and 180 on Dec 23rd.

In Lond: Aldwych, 50 west on Nov 4th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 21 on Feb 2nd. Neate Street SE5, 38 on Feb 9th. Paddington Green, 30 SW on Nov 5th. Regent's Park, 55 on Feb 2nd, 26 on Oct 17th, 24 on Nov 4th and 70 on Dec 1st.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Status: common, but locally declining, breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The BBS records show a decline of 31% in London since 1994 of this well-loved songster yet at Tottenham Marshes there were double the number of singing birds this year. More records of singing birds would be very welcome. There was some evidence of passage in early October this year.

Records of two or more territories are given below (no. of singing males/territories in brackets), together with high counts.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (2). Fairlop Waters, ten birds on Dec 12th. Grays Chalk Pit (2). Hangman's Wood (3). Ingrebourne Valley (6). Lion Gorge (2). Mar Dyke Valley (5). Rainham Marshes (2), maximum count 26 birds on Oct 14th. Warren Gorge, c10 on Nov 16th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP, (5). Hilfield Park Res, 18 birds on Oct 18th. Rye Meads RSPB (7), ten birds on Feb 2nd & 7th. Sopwell Mill (2).

Middx: Alexandra Park (c5). Brent Res (9). Grovelands Park (3). Horsenden Hill (18-20), 15 birds seen on June 13th. Lake Farm GP (4). Oakwood Park (3). Park Farm, Enfield (3). Tottenham Marshes (14). Trent Park (3). Vicarage Farm (2). Wormwood Scrubs (14).

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 12 birds on Dec 12th. Greenwich Park, ten flew west on Oct 13th. River Pool Linear Park (2). Sevenoaks WR, 16 birds on Dec 19th. St Mary's Church, Bexley (2). Sutton at Home, 20 on Jan 6th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (9). Barwell Court Farm (3). Beddington Farmlands, max count was 37 during January. Epsom Common (2). Ham Lands (11). Holmethorpe SP, 20 on Oct 18th. Kingston-upon-Thames (3). London Wetland Centre, 27 birds flew over on Oct 13th. Molesey Heath (2). Prince's Coverts (10). Ravensbury Park (3). The Ledges, Esher (2). West End Common (2).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), nine birds on Oct 21st & 28th. Rotherhithe (1).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Status: common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Larger flocks of Redwings appeared in early February in response to cold weather. The last bird of the spring was at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens on Apr 29th. The first to return were at the London Wetland Centre on Sep 25th. Redwings can be very obvious on autumn migration and there were three large movements this year. On Oct 13th, about 2,000 were recorded overhead including 950 at Brent Res and 453 at Larks Wood. On Oct 17th there were about 3,000 recorded with Brent Res seeing an amazing 1,275 over, Wanstead Flats 530, KGV Res 450, and over 400 at Totteridge Valley. Finally, over 2,000 on Oct 28th, including 700 over Wormwood Scrubs, and 360 in two hours over Tottenham Marshes.

Peak counts for individual sites of 150 or more and all Inner London records are given. Note that many of the higher counts relate to birds flying overhead.

Essex: KGV Res, c450 on Oct 17th. Larks Wood, 453 on Oct 13th. Wanstead Flats, counts during Oct included 530 on 17th & 18th and c250 on 28th.

Herts: Aldenham School, 160 on Jan 18th. Amwell NR, c300 on Oct 28th. Patchetts Green, c200 on Mar 14th. Rye Meads RSPB, c200 on Dec 19th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 170 on Oct 17th, 311 on 28th. Brent Res, c950 on Oct 13th and 1,275 on 17th, with 257 on Dec 23rd. Stoke Newington Res, c1,800 on Dec 23rd. Tottenham Marshes, 360 on Oct 28th. Wormwood Scrubs, c700 on Oct 28th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 206 on Oct 28th. Temple Road, Epsom, c200 on Jan 8th. London Wetland Centre, October counts included 158 on 13th and 248 on 17th; Dec counts included 195 on 4th, and 210 on 23rd.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 63+ on Dec 18th. Regent's Park, 75 on Feb 15th, 312 on Oct 13th, 370 on Oct 17th, 60 on Nov 10th, with Dec counts including 128 on 4th, 94 on 9th, 70+ on 18th and 70+ on 19th.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Status: common breeding resident.

The distinctive song of this large thrush can be heard across much of the capital and the surrounding countryside, where tall trees and open grassland offer suitable habitat. This year's total of about 84 territories from 46 sites, is much less than last year (148 territories from 68 sites). The species has suffered a 13% decline across the UK since 1994, though the BBS has insufficient local data to determine a London trend.

The notes below summarise breeding records, with numbers of singing males/pairs or nests in brackets. This is followed by high counts (ten or more birds), and all records for Inner London. Most of these higher counts are probably family parties.

Essex: 23 territories at 16 sites. Dagenham Chase, 15 on July 8th. Fishers Green Island, 17 on July 10th. Grays Cemetery, nine on Aug 16th and Sep 2nd. Rainham GP, 11 on July 18th. Weald Park, 14 on Nov 3rd. West Ham Park, 11 on June 19th and 26 on July 14th.

Herts: Nine territories at six sites. Aldenham, 12 on Aug 30th. Amwell NR, 11 on Aug 8th. Beech Farm GP, ten on Aug 23rd. Brickendonbury, 20 on Sep 17th. Cassiobury Park, ten on Aug 12th. Chandler's Cross, 11 on July 9th. Garston, 23 on Aug 6th. Harperbury, 20 on July 28th. Hatfield Park, 42 on Aug 3rd. Munden Estate, Watford, 16 on July 28th. North Mymms Park, 16 on Sep 12th. Tyttenhanger GP, 17 on Aug 15th and 12 on Oct 5th. Verulamium Park, ten on Nov 21st. Wildhill, 14 on Sep 13th.

Middx: 20 territories at 13 sites. Alexandra Park, 18 on Aug 13th and 20 on Sep 2nd. Bara Hall Park, Hayes, 13 on Sep 2nd. Park Farm, Enfield, 15 on Aug 28th. Parkside Farm, 25 on June 30th and ten on July 10th. Totteridge Valley, ten on Sep 27th. Town Park, Enfield, 11 on June 10th and July 24th. Wormwood Scrubs, 20 on Aug 23rd.

Kent: Crossness, 11 on Aug 12th. Fooks Cray Meadows, 30 on Sep 19th.

Surrey: c27 territories at eight sites, c20 of these at Wimbledon Common. London Wetland Centre, 13 on Sep 18th, 19 on Oct 4th, ten on Oct 10th and 12 on Oct 16th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (3), ten on Jan 10th, six on Feb 16th, five on Apr 9th, seven on Aug 12th, 11 on Oct 27th and 13 on Oct 28th. Larkhall Park, Stockwell (1). Regent's Park (1).



Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* is a common but locally declining species in the London Area. This male was in excellent voice at Little Wormwood Scrubs in early May. (David Darrell-Lambert).

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Status: scarce migrant and winter visitor, but increasing breeder.

As in previous years, the majority of the records are from the Herts and Essex sectors, associated with the Lee and Ingrebourne Valleys. Birds were present at the main sites for this species in all months of the year. Most of the records are of singing males, however additional evidence of breeding came from four sites; Amwell NR, Rye Meads RSPB, Sevenoaks WR and Swanscombe Marshes. A summary of all the records received (numbers of singing males/pairs in brackets) is presented below.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (1-2). Bonnett's Wood (5). Cornmill Meadows, one in May and one Oct-Nov. Cuckhold's Haven, Barking, one on 26th Apr. Dagenham Chase (1). Gorsebrook, Dagenham, one on Apr 1st. Hall Marsh (1-5). Ingrebourne Valley (26-33). KGV Res, one on Oct 17th. Mar Dyke Valley, one outside breeding season. Netherhall GP, three on July 11th. Orsett, one on Oct 12th. Rainham, near Tesco, one on Apr 26th. Rainham Marshes (7-9). Walthamstow Marsh, one on Apr 4th. Walthamstow Res, one in Apr. Waterworks NR one on Apr 18th.

Herts: Amwell NR (4). Bowyers Water, one on Nov 6th. Broxbourne, one on Mar 18th. North Met Pit (1). Rye Meads (5). Seventy Acres Lake (1).

Middx: Brent Res, one on Oct 18th. Brimsdown, one on Oct 17th. Clissold Park, one from Oct 21st to end of the year. Staines Moor, one in Oct was one of the Stanwell Moor birds. Stanwell Moor, up to two Oct-Dec. Stoke Newington Res, one on Nov 11th. Tottenham Marshes, one on Oct 2nd. Wormwood Scrubs, one on Oct 30th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, one on Mar 22nd.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, one Sep-Dec. Crossness, one on Apr 13th. Dartford Marshes (1). Greenhithe/Swanscombe, up to two late Feb. Littlebrook, three on Dec 12th. Sevenoaks WR (2). Swanscombe Marshes (7).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Oct 8th. Holmethorpe SP, one on Sep 2nd, then from Sep 21st to Oct 12th. London Wetland Centre, up to five Aug and Oct-Dec. Walton Res, one on Apr 3rd.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Status: scarce passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

A similar number of records were received as in previous years, with the majority of the records coming from the Herts and Essex sectors. The first sighting was made at Rainham Marshes on April 9th and the last for the year was at Wormwood Scrubs on October 4th, with no more than three reported at any site. Most of the records were of singing males however additional evidence of breeding came from Lippitts Hill, Netherhall GP and Rye Meads RSPB. The individual recorded at Wimbledon Common was reported as the first since 1988. The numbers of reeling territorial males are listed below (numbers in brackets) together with a summary of all other records.

Essex: Bedfords Park, one Sep 6th-7th. Cornmill Meadows, one Apr 21st-22nd. Dagenham Chase, one on Apr 14th. Fairlop Waters (1). Ingrebourne Valley (1). Lippitts Hill (3). Maylands Fields (2). Netherhall GP (1). Passingford Bridge, one on May 24th. Rainham Marsh (2). Sewardstone Marsh, one on Apr 13th. Tylers Common (2). Waterworks NR, one on Apr 13th.

Herts: Amwell NR (1). Beech Farm GP, one on July 5th. Croxley Common Moor (1). Ellenbrook Park, one on Sep 12th. Holywell, one on Apr 24th. Rye Meads RSPB (2). Stocker's Lake, one on Apr 22nd. Wildhill, one on Apr 29th.

Middx: Brent Reservoir, one on Sep 5th. Totteridge Valley (1). Wormwood Scrubs, one on Oct 4th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP (1-3).

Kent: Crossness (2). Dartford Marshes, one on Apr 13th.

Surrey: Hersham GP, one May 25th-27th. London Wetland Centre, two Apr 12th, one on 15th & 27th. Wimbledon Common, one on June 22nd.

Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*

Status: rare summer visitor.

This is a rare breeding bird in the UK where it is on the edge of its breeding range. There are up to six pairs breeding in the UK annually, all in south east England and East Anglia. A singing male was present at Seventy Acres Lake for at least one month during the

breeding season. This appears to be only the fourth record for London, the last being at Rye Meads in 1989.

Herts: Seventy Acres Lake, one singing from Apr 30th to June 1st (IK *et al.*).

Sedge Warbler Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

Status: common and widespread migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The majority of the records are from the Herts, Essex and Middx sectors. The first bird of the year was recorded at Rainham Marshes on April 5th and the last on October 10th at London Wetland Centre. The highest counts of singing males came from Rye Meads RSPB with 78, followed by Rainham Marshes and the London Wetland Centre. Details of singing males/territories are listed, with the number in brackets, some high counts and all records for Inner London. Very few estimates of territories were received, more would be welcome.

Essex: Ingrebourne Valley (2). Rainham Marshes (15), peak of 22 on May 2nd. Walthamstow Reservoir (9), only six in 2008.

Herts: Amwell NR (25). Cheshunt GPs (25). Maple Lodge NR, six on May 2nd. Rye Meads (78). Stocker's Lake (4). Troy Mill Lake, four singing on Apr 19th. Tyttenhanger GP (1).

Middx: Brent Res (10). Horsenden Hill (1). Isle of Dogs, one on Apr 11th. Staines Moor (2-3). Stanwell Moor (1). Stoke Newington Res (1). Tottenham Marshes (14), only eight in 2008.

Bucks: Horton GP, five on Sep 10th. Old Slade Lake (1). Orlitts Lakes, two on May 13th. Wraybury, two on May 16th.

Kent: Crossness (4). Swanscombe Marshes (2).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (2), 12 on Aug 9th. Hersham GP, one on May 27th. Holmethorpe SP (1). London Wetland Centre (16). Molesey Heath (1).

In Lond: The only records received were one at Regent's Park on May 5th, and one singing at Tower Hill on Apr 14th & 16th.

Reed Warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Status: common and widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The Reed Warbler can be found at wetland sites throughout the London Area, including Inner London, for example at Regent's Park. They also occur on passage singing in quite dry areas, and this year we had such records from a garden in Chafford Hundred, from Jersey Farm, Mudchute Farm, Lake Farm CP and Colnbrook. The highest count this year came from Rye Meads, with 107 singing males, and counts of 40 or more this year at Amwell NR, the London Wetland Centre and Rainham Marshes. The first record of the year was on April 6th at Dagenham Chase and the last was a late bird on October 27th at the London Wetland Centre. Breeding was reported from one Inner London site; Regent's Park. Details of two or more singing males/territories are listed, with the number in brackets, some high counts and any records for Inner London.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (13). Dagenham Chase (5). Ilford (2). Ingrebourne Valley (4). Mar Dyke Valley (5). Rainham Marshes (32), with 68 on June 13th. Walthamstow Res (18). Warren Gorge (7).

Herts: Amwell NR (59). Cheshunt GPs (59). Hatfield Aerodrome (2). Maple Lodge NR (6). Rye Meads RSPB (107). Stocker's Lake (5). Watford Link Road, two probably breeding.

Middx: Brent Reservoir (7). East India Dock (5). Horsenden Hill (6). Kempton NR (3). Stanwell Moor (10). Stockley Park (4). Stoke Newington Res, the earliest ever on Apr 8th. Tottenham Marshes (7). Wormwood Scrubs, the first spring record there, one on Apr 10th.

Bucks: Wraysbury GP (6).

Kent: Crossness (15). Sevenoaks WR (8). Swanscombe Marshes (38).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (9). Black Pond, four singing on May 23rd. Esher Common (2). Hersham GP (2). Holmethorpe SP, probably bred, six in Apr and May. London Wetland Centre (29), a late bird on Oct 27th. Molesey GP (3). South Norwood CP, two on 28th Apr. Tooting Common, a late singer on Sep 22nd. Walton Res (6).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 10th & 20th. Regent's Park (4). Rotherhithe, one on June 23rd and July 24th. Canary Wharf, one on May 20th. St James's Park, one on June 9th and July 10th.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Status: common summer breeding visitor and passage migrant, increasingly common and widespread in winter.

The Blackcap can be found throughout the London Area wherever there is woodland and scrub, including a few Inner London locations. The highest count this year was from Rye Meads with 40 singing males, and counts of 20 or more were received from another eight sites. By far the majority of records were between March and September, but there were records in all months due to wintering birds.

Details of singing males/territories where five or more were recorded are listed, with the number in brackets, some high counts and any records for Inner London.

Essex: Bedfords Park, max 15 on Apr 22nd. Belhus Woods CP (17). Dagenham Chase (5). Grays Chalk Pit (8). Hainault Forest CP, six on Apr 7th. Hall Marsh, ten on Apr 10th. Hangman's Wood (5). Ingrebourne Valley (10). Mar Dyke Valley (15). Rainham Marshes (5), max 28 Sep 16th. Roding Valley Park (15). Walthamstow Res (5).

Herts: Amwell NR (10). Bury Lake, six on Apr 19th. Cheshunt GPs (21). Garston (17). Gobions Wood, ten on May 16th. Little Berkhamsted, 17 on Apr 26th. London Colney, ten on Apr 24th. Maple Lodge NR (6). Northaw, ten on Apr 19th. Potters Bar, 11 on Apr 18th. Roe Hyde, 15 on Apr 10th. Rye Meads RSPB (40). Stocker's Lake, eight on Apr 19th. Wildhill, ten on Apr 14th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 15 on Sep 1st. Brent Reservoir (21). Horsenden Hill (25). Kempton NR (5). Tottenham Marshes (31). Totteridge Valley (15). Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, 12 on Apr 19th. Wormwood Scrubs (10).

Kent: Crossness (10). North Cray Woods (20). Joyden's Wood, 16 on July 1st. Sevenoaks WR (11).

Surrey: Banstead Downs, 11 singing May 20th. Barwell Court Farm (6). Beddington Farmlands (7). Epsom (8). Holmethorpe SP (14). London Wetland Centre (9), 31 on Aug 23rd. Molesey Heath (17). Prince's Coverts (11). R. Wandle Butter Hill- Morden Hall (9). The Ledges, Esher (10). West End Common (5). Wimbledon Common (100+).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2), 11 singing Apr 29th. Regent's Park (14). Rotherhithe (10).

Blackcap, over-wintering birds

| | Jan | Feb | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Essex | 21 | 20 | 4 | 13 |
| Herts | 20 | 15 | 4 | 31 |
| Middx | 11 | 3 | 4 | 11 |
| Bucks | - | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Kent | 2 | 1 | - | - |
| Surrey | 18 | 27 | 6 | 9 |
| In Lond | - | 4 | - | - |
| Total | 72 | 72 | 19 | 67 |

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Status: widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The first of the year was at Fishers Green Island on April 13th and the last was at the London Wetland Centre on September 29th. The highest count was at Rye Meads RSPB with 15 singing males, followed by Sevenoaks WR and Stocker's Lake.

Details of singing males/territories are listed, with the number in brackets, some high counts and any records for Inner London.

Essex: Bedfords Park (5). Belhus Woods CP (1). Fairlop Waters (1). Hainault Forest CP (2). Ingrebourne Valley (4).

Herts: Amwell NR (5). Cheshunt GPs (13). Chiswell Green (1). Hatfield Park (2). Maple Lodge NR (1). Moor Mill (1). Redwell Wood Farm (2). Rye Meads RSPB (15). Stocker's Lake (5). Watford Link Road (1).

Middx: Brent Res (2). Frays Wildfowl Lake (3). Horsenden Hill (1). Kempton NR (1). Park Farm, Enfield (1). Staines Moor (3). Stanwell Moor (1). Tottenham Marshes (1). Trent Park (2).

Kent: Crossness (1). Greenhithe/Swanscombe (5). Lullingstone (2). Sevenoaks WR (11).

Surrey: Banstead Downs (1). Bookham Common (2). Island Barn Res (1). London Wetland Centre (1). Molesey Heath (3). Prince's Coverts (2). South Norwood CP (1). Tooting Common (1). Wimbledon Common (25).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Apr 22nd, May 4th & 14th. Regent's Park, one on May 8th, four on Aug 2nd.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Status: widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The first sighting of the year was on April 10th at Staines Moor and the last was at Little Venice on October 8th. The highest counts this year were at Wormwood Scrubs, Rainham Marshes and Ingrebourne Valley. There were also four recorded at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens. An over-wintering bird was recorded at Seventy Acres Lake on January 2nd, this was the last report of a wintering bird seen previously in 2008.

All records are summarised. Lesser Whitethroats were widely reported singing from mid-April but soon stopped singing, making it difficult to estimate breeding populations. They were much more frequently seen in the autumn.

Essex: Bedfords Park (1). Belhus Woods CP (1). Dagenham Chase (1), four on Aug 25th. Fishers Green Island (1). Grays Chalk Pit (1). Ingrebourne Valley (7). Lion Gorge (2).

Mar Dyke Valley (2), four on Sep 11th. Mill Wood (1). Orsett, three singing May 1st. Rainham Marshes (1), nine on Sep 11th. Tylers Common (1). Walthamstow Res (2). Weald Bridge, two on May 4th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP (2). Croxley Common Moor (2). Jersey Farm (1). Rye Meads RSPB (2), five Aug-Sep. Seventy Acres Lake, one on Jan 2nd.

Middx: Alexandra Park (2). Brent Reservoir (3). East India Dock, two on Apr 19th. Horsenden (3). Isle of Dogs, one on Apr 11th. Kempton NR, two on Apr 24th. Parkside Farm (1). Staines Moor, three in Aug and Sep. Stanwell Moor (1), four on Sep 8th. Tottenham Marshes (2). Totteridge Valley (4). Trent Park (1), three on Aug 8th. Vicarage Farm (1), four on Aug 27th. Wormwood Scrubs (5).

Bucks: Singing birds in late Apr/May at Arthur Jacob NR, Horton GP, Orlitts Lakes, Q. Mother Res, and Wraysbury GP.

Kent: College Farm (1). Crossness (1).

Surrey: Banstead Downs (1). Beddington Farmlands (2). Bookham Common (2). Holmethorpe SP (3). Horton CP (1). London Wetland Centre (2), four on Sep 20th. Tolworth Court Farm (3). Wimbledon Common (1).

In Lond: Victoria Embankment Gdns, singing bird on May 15th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), four on Sep 20th. Little Venice, one on Oct 8th. Regent's Park, one on Sep 20th.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Status: common and widespread passage migrant and breeding summer visitor.

The first report of the year was at Morden Hall Park on April 1st and the last of the year was at Wormwood Scrubs on September 30th. The highest counts were at Mar Dyke Valley, Rainham Marshes and Tottenham Marshes. Beddington Farmlands and Molesey Heath, each held 25 territories also.

Details of singing males/territories where five or more were recorded are listed, with the number in brackets, some high counts and any records for Inner London.

Essex: Baker Street, 15 on May 4th. Bedfords Park, ten on Apr 22nd. Belhus Woods CP (15). Dagenham Chase, seven on June 2nd. Fairlop Waters (10). Orsett (11). Ingrebourne Valley (10), 20 on June 21st. Mar Dyke Valley (14), 37 on July 5th. Pages Wood (9). Rainham Marshes (9), 36 on Aug 13th. Roding Valley Park, 26 on May 2nd. Tylers Common, seven on May 24th. Walthamstow Res, 19 on May 3rd. Wanstead Flats, 20 on Aug 25th. Weald Bridge 14 on May 4th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP (10), 20 singing on Apr 30th. Cheshunt GP (10). Croxley Common Moor (6), 13 singing on Apr 28th. Essendon (11). Hatfield Aerodrome (5). Hatfield Park, 13 on June 14th. Howe Green, eight on May 10th. Northaw (6). Roe Hyde (5). Rye Meads RSPB (27). Tyttenhanger GP (8). Woodside (7).

Middx: Alexandra Park (6). Brent Res (5), 14 singing May 2nd. Horsenden Hill (20). Lake Farm CP (12). Stanwell Moor (6). Tottenham Marshes (36). Totteridge Valley (12). Wormwood Scrubs (13).

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 11 on June 4th. College Farm (7). Crossness (14), 28 singing Apr 26th. Foots Cray Meadows (15). Otford to Filston, 20 on June 16th. Swanscombe Marshes (13).

Surrey: Ashted Common (7). Beddington Farmlands, 25 on Apr 19th. Holmethorpe SP (10). Molesey Heath (25). Prince's Coverts (5). Riddlesdown (1). Wimbledon Common (38).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 27th and Sep 20th. Primrose Hill, one on July 3rd. Regent's Park (1).

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*

Status: rare breeding species, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Still remains an amber list species due to a large decline in the 1960s after severe winters, since which it has made a steady recovery.

The number of records is similar to previous years and as usual all records are for non-breeding birds. Rainham Marshes was the main wintering site this year.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Jan 1st, Feb 17th, Mar 10th & 13th, May 12th & 13th, and Nov 29th (mo). Wanstead Flats, one from Oct 31st-Nov 6th (SF *et al*).

Middx: Bushy Park, one on Jan 21st (SJS). Staines Moor, one female from Oct 9th-18th (FJM *et al*). Wormwood Scrubs, one on Feb 23rd (per DJL).

Bucks: Black Park, one Apr 15th (CCR). Colnbrook, singles Oct 18th and Dec 18th (CDRH).

Kent: Crossness, one male from Sep 3rd-7th and Oct 2nd-11th (JKA, IM).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one from Jan 3rd-9th and on Mar 21st (JPA, KM).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Status: scarce passage migrant.

The Yellow-browed Warbler breeds in Siberia with small numbers passing through the UK every year during Autumn. Two records this year, one staying for a while.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one Sep 20th-25th which may have been present for two weeks (NPS *et al*). Ridlands, one on Nov 8th (PJO).

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Status: scarce passage migrant and former breeding summer visitor.

The Wood Warbler usually arrives in April and leaves in August. The first sighting this year was at Regent's Park on May 5th and the last at Banstead Downs on May 10th. As normal these days, all these records were of passage birds.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Aug 3rd (RJW) and 10th (JMy).

Surrey: Banstead Downs, one on May 10th (DCo). Ridlands, one on May 9th (PJO).

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on May 5th (ARD).

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Status: common and widespread breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, and increasingly widespread in winter.

Chiffchaffs occur widely in the London Area, wherever there is mature woodland. The majority of the records were from the March-May and August-September periods, coinciding with spring and autumn passage and the breeding season. However records from the winter period were also received, with Rye Meads RSPB, Rainham Marshes and London Wetland Centre being consistent and having the highest numbers.

Details of singing males/territories where five or more were recorded are listed, with the number in brackets, some high counts and any records for Inner London.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 18 on Aug 13th. Belhus Woods CP (13). Dagenham Chase, eight on Apr 5th. Fairlop Waters, ten on Apr 22nd. Hainault Forrest CP (5). Hall Marsh, ten on Apr 10th. Ingrebourne Valley (12). Mar Dyke Valley (10). Rainham Marshes, five on Mar 4th. Roding Valley Park (8). Sewardstone Marsh, 30 on Sep 18th. Walthamstow Marsh, seven singing on Mar 20th. Wanstead Flats, 15 on Sep 5th. Wanstead Park (11). Winter birds recorded at 19 sites, including five at Dagenham Chase and Rainham Marshes.

Herts: Cheshunt GPs (9). Hilfield Park Res, ten on Mar 29th. Howe Green, 11 on May 10th. Rye Meads RSPB (17). Winter birds at 11 sites including 15 at Rye Meads RSPB and 12 at West Hyde.

Middx: Alexandra Park (6), 13 on Sep 17th. Brent Res (11). East India Dock, 18 on Sep 27th. Horsenden Hill (14). Kempton NR (8). KGVI Res, ten on Sep 20th. Lake Farm CP, nine Sep 18th. Staines Moor, five singing on Mar 29th. Stanwell Moor GP, seven singing on Apr 12th. Stoke Newington Res, 15 on Sep 7th. Tottenham Marshes (19). Totteridge Valley (5+). Wormwood Scrubs (5). Winter birds recorded at 19 sites including five at Tottenham Marshes.

Bucks: Arthur Jacob NR, 15 on Sep 24th. Winter birds at three sites.

Kent: Chipstead Lake, 11 on Aug 27th. Crayford Marshes, eight on Sep 23rd. Crossness (7), 25 on 21st Sep. North Cray Wood, 13 singing on Apr 1st. Lullingstone, six singing on Mar 29th. Sevenoaks WR, 26 on Aug 8th. Winter birds at six sites.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (6). Ashted Common, 15 singing on June 12th. Barwell Court Farm (9). Beddington Farmlands, 20 on Sep 20th. Harlington Fields, ten on Sep 23rd. Hogsmill SW, six on Sep 30th. Holmethorpe SP, 25 on Sep 13th. Horton CP, 16 singing on Apr 4th. London Wetland Centre, 46 on Sep 23rd. Molesey Heath (13). Prince's Coverts, nine on May 20th. The Ledges, Esher (5). Tooting Common (6). West Molesey, six singing on Mar 29th. Malden Rushett, 13 singing on June 23rd. West End Common (6). Wimbledon Common (60+). Winter birds at eight sites including seven at Beddington Farmlands and six at London Wetland Centre.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, up to three singing sometimes in April and May, but insufficient evidence for a territory. 21 on Sep 20th. Regent's Park, 30 on Sep 20th. Rotherhithe, six singing Apr 6th. Winter records at Broadley St, NW8 on Jan 14th; Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns on Jan 1st & 11th, and Nov 3rd & 18th; Regent's Park on Nov 6th and Tower Bridge on Dec 8th.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

Status: rare winter visitor and passage migrant.

Small numbers of Siberian Chiffchaff were reported in both the 2008/2009 winter period and the 2009/2010 winter period. All records are given below.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one Jan 14th-30th (PPn, PMt, AAB).

Middx: Stoke Newington Res, one Jan 1st-6th (MJP).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, one on Dec 16th and 20th (CDRH).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Status: common and widespread passage migrant, declining as a breeding species in the London Area and UK-wide has caused it to be amber listed.



Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata* is always a good find in the London Area, especially in the light of the national population crash. This bird at Staines Moor in October was a dispersing juvenile. (Andrew Moon)

The first sighting this year was at Wanstead on March 5th, and the last was on October 4th at the London Wetland Centre. In most places the Willow Warbler is now only reported on passage. It is not always easy to see from the records whether there are territorial birds or not, and more information in future would be welcome. Reports of ten or more singing males in early spring came from only a handful of sites in the London Area, the highest being Banstead Downs with 12. The highest numbers were reported during autumn passage with counts of more than 15 coming from Bedfords Park, London Wetland Centre, Mar Dyke Valley and Rye Meads RSPB. There were some records this year of birds whose song contained elements of both Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff.

As Willow Warbler is rapidly declining as a breeding species in London, only confirmed or probable breeding pairs along with males still singing after the middle of May are listed below. Breeding numbers are given in brackets, together with some high counts and all records for Inner London.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 15 on Aug 8th. Belhus Woods CP (2). Cely Woods (4). Fairlop Waters (1). Ingrebourne Valley (2). Mar Dyke Valley, 17 on Sep 2nd. Pages Wood (11). Rainham Marshes, eight on Aug 13th. Tylers Common (2). Weald Park, eight on Sep 9th.

Herts: Beech Farm GP (3). Bricket Wood (2). Croxley Common Moor (6). Rye Meads RSPB (3), 15 on Aug 6th. Smallford (3). St Albans (2). Tyttenhanger GP, 13 on Apr 12th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, six on Aug 12th. Brent Res (2). Harefield (1). Horsenden Hill (1). Lake Farm CP (3). Staines Moor (1). Stoke Newington Res, 12 on Sep 7th & 8th. Tottenham Marshes (2). Wormwood Scrubs (2).

Bucks: Wraybury GP (4).

Kent: Crossness, four on Aug 5th. Swanscombe Marshes, four on Aug 31st.

Surrey: Ashted Common (8). Banstead Downs (3). Cow Common (1). Epsom Common (2). Esher Common (1). London Wetland Centre (1), 17 on Aug 24th. Prince's Coverts (7). Wimbledon Common (3).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns up to three singing until May 21st, then one on Aug 12th. Regent's Park present Apr 5th-May 3rd; peak of eight on Apr 13th, 11 on July 31st and two on Sep 5th. Rotherhithe, up to four in Apr. Tate Modern, one on Apr 6th. Victoria Park, one singing on Apr 8th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Status: breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The combined total breeding season territories or singing males are given for each sector. These show a partial recovery to 103+ (80 in 2008 and 122 in 2007) but are still likely to be an under-estimate of the population size. All breeding records or territories/singing males with two or more pairs (numbers in brackets) are listed, and all sites with counts over ten outside of the breeding season. Still recorded breeding in urban parks, with records from Barking Park and Pymmes Park.

Essex: 11 territories or singing males recorded. Grays Cemetery (2). Epping Forest, 20 on 2nd Jan. Great Warley, ten on Feb 28th.

Herts: 18 territories or singing males recorded. Bricket Wood (4), Garston (2), Whippendell Wood (2).

Middx: 28+ territories or singing males recorded. Alexandra Park (3), Horsenden Hill (2-3). Highgate Cemetery, ten on Jan 5th. Trent Park, 15 on Jan 7th.

Bucks: Black Park, 30 on Oct 11th.

Kent: 7+ territories or singing males recorded. Lamorbey Park (2).

Surrey: 39+ territories or singing males recorded. Wimbledon Common (25+). London Wetland Centre, 31 on Jan 6th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 12+ on 8th Jan. Kensington Gdns, probably bred.

Despite being a well-distributed breeding species in London, Goldcrests Regulus regulus are infrequently encountered in juvenile plumage. These youngsters were in a Rickmansworth garden in August. (Andrew Moon)



Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

Status: scarce passage migrant and winter visitor; rare breeder.

The total of 17 singing birds in 2008 was not matched in 2009 with only a very disappointing four birds present in potential breeding habitat. Passage and winter birds often favour key sites where they can be regularly recorded, especially in the autumn and early winter period. Birds were recorded most frequently in the winter; fewer from Jan to Mar, more from the end of Oct to end of Dec. All breeding season records are given. All records outside the breeding season are listed except for Essex and Middx. These are the two areas where most birds were recorded, and a summary of the records is given.

Essex: By far the most important sector for this species with a total of 80 dated records (14 in the first winter period and 66 in the second period from Aug 25th). Bedford Park, one on Jan 22nd and in the autumn, one on Sep 27th; then recorded frequently from Oct 27th to Dec 28th with two or three birds seen on several days. Belhus Woods CP, one on Jan 4th and a singing male on Apr 15th, which was the only breeding season record for Essex. Grays Chalk Pit on Nov 5th and Dec 1st. Great Warley, two on Feb 28th, Mar 2nd & 30th. Harold Hill, 1-2 from Nov 17th to Dec 28th. Havering-atte-Bower, one on Dec 20th and two on 28th. Knighton Wood, one on Nov 5th and Dec 25th. Mores Plantation, Bentley, two on Dec 30th. Strawberry Hill Ponds, two on Nov 22nd, one on Dec 1st & 6th. Wanstead Park, two to three from Nov 1st to Dec 12th.

Herts: Broxbourne Woods, one singing on Apr 28th. Danemead Wood, two in a tit flock on Sep 22nd. Hilfield Park Res, one singing on Mar 14th, a female ringed on Nov 8th. Marshalswick, one in a garden on Nov 12th; this may have been the same bird as one in the Tyttenhanger area, one on Nov 9th.

Middx: Abney Park Cemetery LNR, two from Jan 1st to Mar 8th. Brent Res, one to two in Jan, one on Feb 18th. Horsenden Hill, four records of singles Jan-Feb, then three records in Dec. Springfield Park, one on Aug 25th, two on Oct 11th & 12th. Staines Moor, singles recorded on six dates between Oct 15th and Dec 1st. Stanwell Moor, singles on Nov 20th and Dec 1st. Stoke Newington Res, two on Sep 22nd, one on 23rd, one on Oct 23rd. Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, two from Oct 27th to Dec 24th. Trent Park, singles on Jan 23rd and Mar 10th, 1-2 from Oct 17th to Dec 31st, with four on Nov 2nd. Whitewebbs Wood, three on Oct 26th & 29th, up to three from Nov 25th to Dec 17th.

Kent: Castle Wood, one on Jan 27th. High Elms CP, one on Oct 4th. Joyden's Wood, one on Nov 4th.

Surrey: Claremont Lake, one Jan 21st. Horton CP a female Dec 27th. London Wetland Centre, one Mar 15th, Sep 25th-26th, Nov 29th. Purley Beeches, one Mar 14th and Sep 27th. Wimbledon Common, one Feb 26th-27th, and May 8th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 8th, Feb 3rd and Nov 17th. Regent's Park, one on Apr 10th and a female on Nov 11th. Russia Dock Woodland, singles on Jan 10th, 25th-26th, Feb 1st & 21st. Tate Modern, one on Apr 6th.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Status: declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

This species continues to decline. Only nine or ten breeding records this year (11 in 2008), and very little spring passage, with most birds being recorded on return passage. All

breeding season records are given (number of pairs in brackets). High counts are given for each sector, but most records were of single birds.

Essex: Bedfords Park (1), eight on Aug 30th and seven on Sep 11th. Stapleford Tawney (3). Theydon Garnon (1). Mayesbrook Park, four on Aug 29th & 30th. Rainham Marshes, three on Aug 11th. Wanstead Flats, ten on Sep 5th. Weald Park, four on Sep 9th.

Herts: Amwell NR, six on July 30th. Hatfield (1), Essendon (1), Pond Wood (1), Whippendell Wood (1 possible).

Middx: Alexandra Park, eight on Sep 1st. Park Farm, Enfield, six on Sep 3rd. Trent Park, seven on Sep 7th.

Bucks: Arthur Jacob NR, two on Aug 27th and one on Sep 19th.

Kent: Greenwich Park (1). Crossness, two on Sep 12th.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, two on Sep 20th, the only sector count of more than one bird.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one May 17th & 21st (the only spring records received from Inner London), then three on Aug 12th. Regent's Park, three on Sep 10th.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Status: passage migrant in variable numbers.

An average year with almost exactly the same number of records as in 2008. There was only a single bird in the spring. Autumn passage was from Aug 6th to Sep 25th, although almost 70% were recorded between Aug 21st and Sep 25th. All records are listed.

Essex: Bedfords Park, one Aug 30th and Sep 4th. Ingrebourne Valley, one May 4th, one Aug 23rd & 24th and two or three Sep 2nd. Mayesbrook Park, one Aug 29th & 30th. Rainham Marshes, one Sep 1st. West Ham Park, one Aug 21st.

Herts: Newgate Street, one on Aug 22nd. North Met Pit, one on Aug 21st. Rye Meads RSPB, one on Aug 13th. Wildhill, one on Aug 15th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Aug 6th & 9th and Sep 1st. Oakwood Park, singles on Aug 9th & 28th. Parkside House, one on Aug 29th. Stoke Newington Res, one on Sep 16th. Tottenham Marshes, one on Sep 6th. Vicarage Farm, one on Sep 19th.

Kent: Crossness, one on Aug 9th.

In Lond: Rotherhithe, one on Sep 25th. Victoria Park, one on Sep 7th.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Status: rare autumn and winter visitor, very rare breeder.

All records of this attractive reedbed specialist are given apart from a long series of sightings from its main site at Rainham Marshes that are summarised. There was no evidence of breeding and little change in status or distribution from the previous year, with only one record outside the usual Lower Thames corridor.

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley, three on Oct 26th and on Nov 17th. Rainham Marshes, recorded on 14 dates in the first winter period with a peak of four and 13 dates in the second winter period with a peak of three on Oct 10th, 19th & 21st.

Kent: Crossness, one on Sep 28th and two on Oct 15th. Greenhithe/Swanscombe, one on Feb 21st. Swanscombe Marshes, four on Jan 3rd and one on Aug 2nd.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Jan 3rd.



Once a familiar breeder in the capital, Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* is now most frequently encountered on passage, especially in autumn. This migrant was at Alexandra Park in late August. (Dominic Mitchell)

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Status: common and widespread breeding resident.

This species still seems to be doing well in London, with more breeding records received this year. All confirmed breeding records or territories/singing males of more than two (numbers in brackets) are listed, together with the peak post-breeding count for each sector. The total of 181 pairs must be a significant under-estimate of the total population, especially as several key sites are missing. The breeding records for Inner London (none listed in 2008) are most welcome.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (6). Mar Dyke Valley (5). Walthamstow Res (4). Warren Gorge (4). Wanstead Park, 100+ on Nov 8th.

Herts: Cassiobury Park, 65 on Feb 10th. London Colney (5). Rye Meads RSPB (17), 65 on Aug 22nd. Tyttenhanger GP (5).

Middx: Tottenham Marshes (4). Wormwood Scrubs (6). Golders Hill Park, 50+ on Nov 4th.

Kent: North Cray Wood (5). Sevenoaks WR, 32 on Dec 31st.

Surrey: Esher (3). Holmethorpe SP, 31 on Apr 1st. London Wetland Centre (3), 46 on Dec 2nd. Molesey Heath (3). West End Common (5). Wimbledon Common (60+).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (1), Charing Cross (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 90+ Nov 3rd. Kensington Gdns (4). Paddington Green (1). Vauxhall Park (1).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Status: abundant breeding resident.

This is a common breeding species in London as the record of 16 territories in Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens shows, but we receive very few breeding counts. As it is so under-

recorded, this year only territory counts of ten or more have been included, with the exception of Inner London where all breeding records are listed. There seems to be little change in the breeding numbers from regularly reported sites. The peak count in each sector is also given.

Essex: Larks Wood (10). Mar Dyke Valley, 46 on June 1st. Warren Gorge (10).

Herts: Amwell NR, 50 on Feb 8th. Cole Green, 50 on Nov 6th. Rye Meads RSPB (16).

Middx: Totteridge Valley, 30 on Sep 7th. Wormwood Scrubs (15).

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, 45 on Aug 30th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (15). Holmethorpe SP, 64 on Apr 1st. Oxshott Heath area, 48 on Jan 31st. West End Common (14).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (4). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (16), including two successful broods in the tops of lamp posts.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Status: abundant breeding resident.

As with Blue Tit, this is a common breeding species in London, being seen in most urban gardens, but we receive very few breeding counts. As it is so under-recorded, this year only territory counts of ten or more have been included, with the exception of Inner London where all breeding records are listed. There seems to be little change in the breeding numbers from regularly reported sites. The peak count in each sector is also given.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, 42 on Sep 18th. Grays Chalk Pit (13). Mar Dyke Valley (24).

Herts: Cole Green, 38+ on Nov 6th. Rye Meads RSPB (28).

Middx: Horsenden Hill, 33 on Mar 3rd.

Kent: Joyden's Wood, 29 on Apr 6th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (13). London Wetland Centre, 52 on Oct 21st. Molesey Heath (12). West End Common (11).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (3). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (6), 22 on Nov 23rd.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Status: common breeding species.

All confirmed breeding records or territories/singing males (numbers in brackets) are listed together with the peak count for each sector. The total of 122 pairs must be a significant under-estimate of the total population when half of this figure is accounted for by Wimbledon Common alone. Several key sites are missing, including Regent's Park which held six pairs in 2008, making it impossible to determine any trends.

Essex: Epping Forest, ten on Jan 2nd. Roydon (1).

Herts: Berrygrove Wood (1). Cuffley (1). Garston (1). Hilfield Park Res (1). North Mymms Park (7). Northaw Great Wood (6). Woodside, 12+ on July 19th.

Middx: Abney Park Cemetery (1), Alexandra Park (2). Brent Res (1). Enfield County School (2). Grovelands Park (2). Hilly Fields Park (1). Horsenden Hill (1). Lakeside (1). Oakwood Park (2). Park Farm (1). Springfield Park (1). Stoke Newington Res (1). Trent Park (4), nine on Feb 26th. Waterlow Park (1).

Kent: Joyden's Wood, 13 on July 1st. Lamorbey Park (2), North Cray Wood (1). Sevenoaks WR (1).

Surrey: Epsom Common (1). Esher (3). Esher Common (3). Hook (1). London Wetland Centre (1). Oxshott Heath area, eight on Jan 31st. Prince's Coverts (1). Sanderstead (1). Sanderstead Plantation (1). Weston Green (2). Wimbledon Common (60+). Worcester Park (1).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdns (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (4), four on June 23rd.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Status: localised and declining breeding resident and scarce winter visitor.

The decline of this species as a breeding bird seems to be continuing. Between Mar 8th and July 11th, there were only six sites reporting Marsh Tits, with probably only two pairs involved. Almost all the records outside the breeding season are from Herts. All records are given with the exception of Herts where data is summarised to include all regular sites, breeding records and peak counts.

Essex: Waltham Abbey, one present on five dates in the second winter period.

Herts: Amwell NR, up to two present on 20 dates including a pair in the breeding season.

Danemead Wood, 5+ present on Oct 13th. Maple Lodge NR, one present throughout the year on 34 dates. Northaw Great Wood, a peak count of eight including two singing males on Feb 18th and eight on Dec 14th. Present during breeding season at Northaw, Potters Bar and Wildhill. Also recorded on 16 other sites with a max of two birds at each.

Kent: Bayley's Hill, one on Mar 23rd.

Surrey: Bookham Common, one on Feb 7th and Mar 7th, two on Nov 8th. Headley Heath, a pair and a singing male on Mar 15th. Limsfield Chart, one on Oct 25th.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Status: common breeding resident.

Only 57 pairs/territories were reported this year (80 in 2008, 60 in 2007), so no real evidence of any general change. As usual, the largest number of pairs were at Wimbledon Common (20), the next highest being five at Esher. There were records of birds at feeders in Rickmansworth and Surbiton. Birds were recorded 'unusually' at Cornmill Meadows, Island Barn Res and Q. Mary Res and there were also several records from Stocker's Lake, where it was reported as scarce. All confirmed breeding records or territories/singing males (numbers in brackets) are listed together with the peak count for each sector.

Essex: Epping Forest (1). Great Warley (1). Little Warley Common, ten on Oct 18th. Thorndon CP (1). Strawberry Hill Ponds (1).

Herts: Bell Bar (1). Bottom Wood (1). Cassiobury Park (1). Croxley Green (1). Haberdasher's Aske's School (1). Howe Green (1). Micklefield Hall (1). Northaw Great Wood, 15 on Dec 14th. Oxhey (1).

Middx: Alexandra Park (2). Forty Hall (1). Grovelands Park (1+). Horsenden Hill (2). Lakeside (1). Perivale (2). Trent Park (1), ten on Dec 24th.

Kent: Bexley Woods (1). Brockley NR (1). Joyden's Wood, four on Dec 1st. Lullingstone (2). North Cray Wood (3).

Surrey: Arbrook Common (1). Esher (2). Fishpond Wood NR (1). Selsdon Park, eight on Sep 18th. The Ledges, Esher (3). Wimbledon Common (20+).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one pair bred with three juveniles seen.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Status: common breeding resident.

Only 58 pairs/territories were reported this year (79 in 2008, 69 in 2007), so there may be some decline in breeding numbers. As usual, the largest number of pairs were at Wimbledon Common (30), the next highest being three at Trent Park. Very few records are received from urban areas, despite the fact that a pair bred at Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens. More information on the status of Treecreeper in urban woods and parks would be very welcome. All confirmed breeding records or territories/singing males (numbers in brackets) are listed together with the peak count for each sector.

Essex: Bedfords Park (1). Claybury Park, five on Nov 12th. Epping Forest (3).

Herts: Amwell NR (2). Bernards Heath (1). Bricket Wood (1). Cassiobury Park (1). Hoddesdon (2). Northaw Great Wood, seven on Dec 14th. Potters Bar (1). Rye Meads RSPB (1), the first confirmed breeding for some time. St Albans (1). Stocker's Lake (1). Water End (1). Woodside (1).

Middx: Darlands Lake (1). Grovelands Park (1). Park Farm (1). Parkside Farm (1). Trent Park (3), ten on Jan 7th and Feb 11th. Waterlow Park (1).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP, two on Nov 9th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR and Joyden's Wood, present throughout the year. Sevenoaks WR, five on Aug 8th.

Surrey: Esher Common, four on Dec 6th. The Ledges, Esher (2). West End Common (1). Wimbledon Common (30+).

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (1), seven on Feb 11th.

Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus*

Status: rare vagrant.

For the sixth consecutive year, Rainham Marshes has hosted this rare continental winter visitor; they were first recorded at Rainham in 2004. It is the only known site in the UK which regularly holds over-wintering birds of this species.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, two from 2008, remained from Jan 1st to Feb 11th (RSPB). Reported again on Mar 29th (PMT).

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

Status: rare vagrant.

The first record for London, and the eighth accepted record for Britain and Ireland, this over-wintering Asiatic bird was very obliging from October to December. (See paper on page 203 for full details of this.)

Middx: Staines Moor, a juvenile shrike, found on Oct 11th, at first thought to be a Red-backed Shrike, was re-identified as a Brown Shrike the next day. Present until Dec 17th but re-appeared for one day on Jan 1st 2010 (JG, CDRH *et al*).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

Status: rare passage migrant and winter visitor.

Two records this year of this less than annual visitor, after one record last year.



After a complex identification process, this shrike on Staines Moor was confirmed as Britain's seventh Brown Shrike Lanius cristatus. It was also the first record for the London Area, and the only inland occurrence in Britain. (Andrew Moon)

Herts: Cuffley, one from Jan 9th to 12th (JHvS - finder unknown).

Middx: Staines Moor, one on Oct 13th (FJM, PN, DJM et al).

Jay Garrulus glandarius

Status: common breeding bird, the resident population boosted by immigrants in the autumn and winter.

In contrast with other members of the crow family, the Jay is a secretive nester, and few breeding records are received. One nest, on Clapham Common, was only discovered by the commotion which arose when the parents were trying to see off egg-thieving Carrion Crows. Observers are encouraged to look out for nests and young. The population is fairly stable, with 2009 showing a very high level in numbers (BBS Survey). Jays have also been seen fighting with other corvids such as Magpies as in Berrylands.

The notes below list all records with evidence of breeding - in some cases simply pairs seen together - no. of pairs shown in brackets, together with all records for inner city localities and some of the higher counts elsewhere.

Essex: Bedfords Park, six on Apr 22nd. Belhus Woods CP, five on Nov 9th. Fairlop Waters, eight on Jan 24th. Grays Cemetery (2). Grays Chalk Pit (3). Ingrebourne Valley, eight on Apr 19th and Sep 20th. Knighton Wood, ten on Dec 2nd. Mar Dyke Valley (3). Merrymeade CP, six on Dec 30th. Wanstead Flats, five on Aug 11th. Warren Gorge, six on Oct 25th. West Ham Park, nine on Nov 28th.

Herts: Brickendonbury, 30 on Dec 1st. London Colney (1), six, including three fledglings June 27th. Maple Lodge NR (1). Watford (1), two adults and three juvs on July 14th. Wildhill (1).

Middx: Alexandra Park (1). Grovelands Park, seven on Nov 19th. Hilly Fields Park (1). Horsenden Hill (12-20), max 17 Apr 18th. Oakwood Park (1). Park Farm, Enfield (1). Southgate (2). Totteridge Valley (1). Trent Park (3). Wormwood Scrubs (1).

Bucks: Wraysbury GP one on Oct 16th.

Kent: Joyden's Wood, 14 on Dec 1st. Sevenoaks WR, 12 on Oct 10th. Swanscombe Marshes, five on Apr 16th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (2), ten on Feb 14th. Beddington Farmlands, six on Sep 1st. Norton Ave, Berrylands, six on Sep 30th. Clapham Common (1), nest raided by Carrion Crow. Hogsmill SW, five on Mar 29th. Holmethorpe SP, seven on Apr 13th. London Wetland Centre, 11 on Aug 24th. Prince's Coverts, six on Dec 28th. The Ledges, Esher (3). Tolworth Court Farm, six on Mar 21st. West End Common (2). Worcester Park (1).

In Lond: Buckingham Palace, one seen March to May. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2), seven on Oct 29th. Paddington Green, six on Apr 19th.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Status: abundant breeding resident.

Seen and heard throughout the LNHS area, this species continues to thrive. Several large winter roosts were reported including 102 at Horsenden Hill, and 96 at Roding Valley Park. The BBS suggests a 24% increase since 1995. However, although the Magpie nests throughout the area, few breeding records were received, though two notable examples were on street trees in Westminster. It was noted that a Magpie was seen mobbing a Tawny Owl with c20 Jackdaw and 35 Carrion Crow by Alpha Road, Surrey.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 32 on Mar 13th. Belhus Woods CP, 24 on July 12th. Fairlop Waters, 27 on Jan 24th. Larks Wood, 28 on Oct 13th leaving roost. Mar Dyke Valley, 24 on Oct 3rd. Rainham Marshes, 31 on Jan 30th. Roding Valley Park, 96 on Jan 10th in the roost. Warren Gorge, 63 on Feb 1st. West Ham Park, 38 Feb 27th.

Herts: Bowyers Water, 30 on Apr 22nd. Cole Green area, 30 on Feb 7th. Jersey Farm, 20 on Feb 26th. Letchmore Heath, 20 on Jan 18th. Lynsters Farm, 20 on Oct 31st. Potters Bar, 33 on Jan 11th. Rye Meads RSPB (5). St Albans, 20 on Dec 8th all in one tree. Stocker's Lake, 40 on Nov 29th in roost. Tyttenhanger GP, 21 on Feb 15th. Watford, 22 on Jan 27th.

Middx: Horsenden Hill (10), 102 on Feb 7th. Lake Farm CP, 53 on Sep 18th. Vicarage Farm, 38 on Mar 13th, roosting group. Wormwood Scrubs, 30 on Feb 20th.

Kent: Crossness, Southern Marshes, 38 on Apr 5th. Sevenoaks WR, 24 on Mar 18th. Sutton at Hone, 23 on Feb 17th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (6). Barwell Court Farm, 22 on May 16th. Beddington Farmlands, 96 on Nov 1st. Ditton Common, 28 on June 30th. Holmethorpe SP, 60 on Dec 1st; one seen carrying a Slow Worm on Apr 14th. London Wetland Centre, 30 on Sep 29th and Dec 15th. Molesey Heath (6). Wimbledon Common, 24 on Sep 29th

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gardens, 11 on May 2nd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 31 on Jan 1st, (Breeding resident since 1971). Kensington Gdns birds bred; in the standard walk areas, numbers of Magpie are at their highest level in six years in both parks. It is possible that they are at least partly to blame for the fall in thrush numbers, as they are quite good at spotting and robbing nests when they have young to feed.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant; much scarcer in the inner suburbs and city centre.

Although still a common breeder in the rural and suburban parts of the LNHS area, this species occurs mainly as a spring/autumn passage migrant in the inner areas, possibly due to lack of suitable habitat. In more rural areas impressive autumn and winter roosts can still be found, eg 1,700 at Sevenoaks WR, c1,000 at Beech Farm GP, c1,000 at Broadwater Lake, c1,000 at New Malden, and c1,000 at Bedfont Lake.

All breeding records are given (nos. of pairs in brackets), followed by some of the largest flocks and all records for Inner London.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 500 on Jan 21st. Hainault Forest CP, 100 on Nov 12th. Mar Dyke Valley (8). Orsett Fen, 150 on Nov 10th. Roding Valley Park, 120 on Sep 25th. Wanstead Flats, 100+ on Jan 9th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 600 on roost on Jan 30th. Beech Farm GP, 1,000+ on roost on Oct 29th. Brickendonbury, 100 on Feb 19th. Bricket Wood Common (3), 100 on May 19th. Coopers Green GP, 600 on roost on Dec 6th. Garston, 200 on July 26th. Hatfield Aerodrome, 100+ on May 17th. Hatfield Park, 350+ on July 14th. Lynsters Farm, c100 on Jan 22nd. North Mymms Park, c165 on Mar 7th. Northaw Great Wood, 140 on Nov 7th. Oaklands, St Albans 1,500+ pre-roosting flight on Jan 18th. Redwell Wood Farm, 200+ on Feb 7th. Rye Meads RSPB, 400+ on Oct 16th. Stocker's Lake, 250+ on Nov 28th plus large numbers heading to roosts in Nov and Dec. Tyttenhanger GP, 200+ on July 22nd. Water End, 155 on Jan 1st. Woodoaks Farm, 150 on Apr 11th.

Middx: Broadwater Lake, 1,000+ to roost on Jan 25th. Hampton Court Park, 300 on July 2nd. Home Park, 300 on July 2nd. Kempton NR, 1,000 to roost at Bedfont Lakes on Jan 11th.

Kent: Greatness Pits, 200 on June 19th. Sevenoaks, 290 to roost on Oct 23rd. Sevenoaks WR, 1,700 to roost on Jan 14th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 503 on Jan 1st. Canons Farm, 600 on Oct 11th. Holmethorpe SP, 1,000 on Feb 1st and 700 on Aug 29th. Island Barn Res, c400 on Mar 24th. Little Woodcote, 250 on Oct 31st. New Malden, 1,000+ to roost on Mar 31st. Portsmouth Road FB, 205 on Nov 9th. Rushett Farm, 400 on July 19th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, up to five birds seen in Oct, one or two birds seen the rest of the year. Kensington Green, one on Sep 21st. Paddington Green, one on Mar 31st. Regent's Park, seven on Oct 9th.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Status: common breeding resident in the outer part of the LNHS Area, much scarcer in urban localities.

The number of rookeries reported was down again this year, with records from just 11 sites and a total of c115 pairs. Whilst it is clear that this reflects a lack of surveying, notably in Essex, it is hard to avoid the impression that Rooks are declining even in the more rural parts of the area. The average number of nests per site was just 11 (19 in 2008, 40 in 2006). The regularly recorded rookery at Titsey held only half of last year's number. Herts again provided the majority of the records, with only a single rookery reported in Essex and Surrey. However two new breeding sites were discovered, including

five nests at Gunpowder Mill and a single pair at Rye Meads RSPB. The BBS indicates a steady decline of around 3% per year since 2000 across the UK, though with considerable variation between one region and another.

Details of all rookeries are given below, with the no. of nests in brackets, followed by some of the highest counts in each sector and all records from Inner London.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 300 on Dec 17th. Gidea Park, 30 on Dec 18th. Hainault Forest CP, 50 on Nov 12th. Rainham Marshes, 192 on Feb 2nd. Royal Gunpowder Mills (5).

Herts: Bricket Wood (4), nests on pylons on derelict land. Chandler's Cross (25-30). Garston (15), 50 flying to roost at Bricket Wood on Sep 6th. Leavesden Green (11). Redwell Wood Farm, c60 in Jan and Feb. Rye Meads RSPB, 200 on Oct 16th. Sopwell (12). Tyttenhanger GPs, 74 on Jan 31st. Woodside (4-5).

Middx: KGVI Res, six on Jan 17th. Staines Moor, 11 on Feb 17th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, 120 to roost on Jan 14th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, 28 on May 4th. Titsey (19), a reduction from the 41 nests in 2008.

In Lond: Paddington Green, singles on Mar 21st and Aug 20th.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Status: abundant breeding resident.

Abundant throughout the London Area, this species congregates mainly on the outskirts of London, however increasing numbers are appearing on the Thames foreshore at low tide, feeding. The BBS shows a 58% increase in London since 1995, in contrast to a 9% increase for the UK as a whole. However, we receive relatively few records and more nesting counts would be welcome, especially from inner areas.

All breeding records of five or more are given, with no. of nests/territories in brackets, together with all Inner London records and some of the highest counts elsewhere.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 200 on Dec 17th. Fen Lane, Orsett, 200 on Dec 2nd. Ingrebourne Valley, 150 on July 19th. Orsett Fen, 200 on Nov 10th. Parsloes Park, 115 on Apr 18th. Rainham Marshes, 300 on Mar 14th. Walthamstow Res (7), this is down from ten pairs in 2008.

Herts: Bricket Wood Common, 82 on Feb 8th. Gobions Wood, 150+ on Apr 15th. Redwell Wood Farm, c200 on Apr 14th. Rye Meads RSPB (7). Sopwell Mill, c115 on Feb 22nd. Wildhill, 100+ feeding on Dec 21st.

Middx: Brent Res, 142 on Aug 11th. Durant's Park, 74 on Apr 14th, with 'several occupied nests'. Horsenden Hill, 1,384 on Jan 24th, common breeding resident. Wormwood Scrubs, c400 on Jan 29th.

Bucks: Colnbrook, 300 on Apr 28th.

Kent: Crossness, 100+ on Feb 23rd. Danson Park, 132 on Aug 28th. Greatness Pits, 100 on June 19th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common (5). Beddington Farmlands, 3,188 on Dec 1st. Canons Farm, 250 on Oct 11th. Hersham GP, 500 on Aug 16th. Holmethorpe SP, 750 on Feb 1st. Island Barn Res, 250 on Mar 24th. London Wetland Centre, 208 on Jan 11th, 160 on Nov 4th. Malden Rushett (16). Molesey Heath (8). Tandridge, c200 in May. Wimbledon Common 350 on Nov 30th.

In Lond: Buckingham Palace, four on Jan 1st. Charing Cross area, two on Apr 27th. Hyde

Park/Kensington Gdns, highest count was 114 on Feb 18th. Paddington Green (1), 48 on Dec 14th. Southwark Park, 92 on Mar 17th. St James's Park, 40+ on Nov 22nd.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Status: scarce visitor.

2009 appears to have been an unusually good year for sightings of Raven, with 21 site records. Almost half the sightings were in Herts, where birds are known to have settled near St Albans for some months.

Essex: Bedfords Park, one on Nov 22nd. Brentwood, one on Oct 18th. Chingford, one on Oct 22nd. Havering-atte-Bower, one on Sep 29th. Holyfield Hall Farm, one on Apr 22nd & 28th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Jan 11th, and two on 18th. Broxbourne, one on Apr 15th. Cassiobury Park, one on Nov 12th. Combe Wood, one Apr 24th-25th. Essendon, one on Jan 7th. Salisbury Hall Farm, one on Apr 24th. Shenleybury, one on Apr 23rd. St Albans, two on Jan 10th. Tyttenhanger GP, two on Apr 19th.

Middx: Stoke Newington Res, one on Sep 22nd, first site record.

Bucks: Black Park, two on Dec 4th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, singles on May 3rd and Sep 5th. Limsfield Chart, one on Sep 5th. Tevereux, two on Jan 11th.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Status: common, but continued declining, breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The decline continues, with numbers down 40% down since 1995 in the London region (BBS data), reflecting the national trend. However, the Starling remains a familiar bird across the Area. Substantial flocks continued to be reported in winter, although the really spectacular flocks in central London are now a thing of the past. However good numbers were reported from Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, with 200 or more on several dates.

Some of the highest counts and migrating flocks are given, and breeding records (nos. of pairs in brackets) for Inner London only.

Essex: Chafford Hundred, 200 Sep-Oct. Fairlop Waters, 250 on Aug 20th. Grays Town Centre, 300 on Aug 20th. Grey Goose Farm, 500 on Aug 16th. Rainham Marshes, 1,000 on Jan 3rd, rising to 5,000 on 17th. Walthamstow Res, 300+ on July 29th-Aug 2nd. Wanstead Flats, 1,000 on Oct 18th.

Herts: Amwell NR, 1,000 on Oct 21st. Coursers Farm, 700 over on Oct 20th. Hampermill Lake, 400 on Feb 17th. Hilfield Park Res, 200 roosting in reed bed Oct-Nov. Rye Meads RSPB, 204 on May 2nd. Stocker's Lake, 400 on Oct 28th. Tyttenhanger GP, 200+ on Mar 26th. Woodside, Hatfield, 250 on Feb 22nd.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 300 on Oct 15th. Brent Res, 424 over on Oct 15th. Horsenden Hill, 150 on Sep 20th. Lake Farm CP, 300 on Aug 26th, Sep 13th & 16th. Staines Res, 500 on Sep 6th. Totteridge Valley, 200 on Jan 1st. Wormwood Scrubs, 400 on July 30th.

Kent: Crayford Marshes, 200+ on Nov 11th. Crossness, 500 in Feb and Aug. Greatness Pits, 340 on Nov 6th. Greenwich Park, 675 on Oct 19th. Swanscombe Marshes, 600 on Aug 31st.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 2,000 on Aug 2nd. Holmethorpe SP, pre-roost flock of 3,370 Sep 18th. Kingston-upon-Thames, 500 on May 24th. London Wetland Centre, 1,130 on Oct 18th. Portsmouth Road FB, 205 on Nov 9th. Surbiton, 500 on Nov 16th. Tolworth Court Farm, 200 on Sep 9th.

In Lond: Hyde Park (1). Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, bred in small numbers, 400 on Feb 1st. Kemp Court, Stockwell (3), nests in ventilation pipes of flats. Paddington Green, 212 on Oct 19th. Wyvil Estate, Stockwell (5), also from nests in ventilation pipes of flats.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Status: breeding resident, declined severely since 1990s, and still showing a decrease in breeding populations.

The House Sparrow's decline continues to cause concern in many urban areas around the country and especially in London. The percentage decline across the UK has been 6% since 1995 while the decline in London was 69%.

There is clearly substantial variation between different parts of the LNHS Area. For example, out of 36 counts of 50 or more birds, 70% were in the Essex sector, with four in Surrey, three in Herts and three in Middx. Sparrows remain scarce in many of the inner suburbs and central area, so it is good to see numbers picking up again at the Tower of London. More breeding records, especially from inner areas, would be welcome.

Large breeding counts, with nos. of nests/territories/breeding pairs in brackets, together with some of the largest counts, other records of interest and a summary of records for Inner London are given below.

Essex: Drake Rd, Chafford Hundred (22), 87 on Feb 1st. Grays (30). Rainham Marshes, 74 on Aug 16th. Thurrock Rugby Club (25), 91 on Feb 1st. Walthamstow, 50 on Feb 25th.

Herts: Ridge, 70 on Aug 28th. Stocker's Lake, 50 on Nov 20th.

Middx: Horsenden Hill (20). Lake Farm CP, 110 on Aug 27th. Wormwood Scrubs, 58 on Oct 28th.

Surrey: Berrylands, c50 adults and young July 20th. Holmethorpe SP, 60 on Sep 13th. New Malden, 50 on Nov 11th. Rushett Farm, 80 on July 19th, healthy breeding population. Wimbledon Common (7).

In Lond: Battersea, 27 on Sep 27th. Drury Lane, nine on Apr 9th. John Buckle Centre, Wandsworth (5). Larkhall Park, Stockwell (7). New Covent Garden Market (1). Regent's Canal, Islington (4), Regent's Park (2). Rotherhithe, 30 on Apr 6th. Southwark, 20 on Aug 20th. Stockwell (2), ten on Oct 11th.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Status: scarce breeding resident, confined to a few sites in LNHS Area. UK population recovering, following severe decline since the late 1970s.

There has been a 73% increase in the whole of the UK, however there isn't any information for the London Area. Beddington Farmlands continues to be the prime site for this species in the LNHS Area, thanks to the work of the Beddington Farm Bird Group. However, numbers were down on last year, with 61 boxes used (81 in 2008). The Herts sites, which Herts Bird Club monitors had varying results.

Details of singing males/territories where two or more (number in brackets) and counts above five are given below.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, six on Sep 8th.

Herts: Coursers Farm (25). North Mymms Park, 18+ on Mar 1st. Redwell Wood Farm, 18 on Jan 3rd and Feb 7th. Tyttenhanger GP (2), although both failed. 14 on Jan 9th & 16th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (61), 354 juveniles ringed, 82 on Feb 25th and 91 on Nov 28th.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Status: common breeding resident, augmented by continental influxes in autumn and winter.

Although common throughout our area, very few breeding records for the Chaffinch were received. As before, more are requested, especially in built-up areas. The BBS indicates a steady increase in London since 1994, which is encouraging, especially as the upward trend seems to be substantially sharper than that for the UK as a whole over the same period.

A remarkable sighting was 128 birds in Alexandra Park on November 7th, as was 430 seen flying over Greenwich Park on October 19th and 68 at Regent's Park on Feb 15th. Although nine flocks of over 100 were seen, they were much smaller flocks than in 2008, when 2,000 were seen in one place. However, only smaller flocks of up to 707 were seen in 2007, so 2008 may have been an exceptionally good year for Chaffinches.

The notes below list breeding information for sites with two or more pairs (nos. of singing males/territories in brackets) followed by peak counts of 60 or more (ten within the London boroughs) and all records for Inner London.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, seven on July 12th (three juv). Mar Dyke Valley, five calling males on Feb 18th. Rainham Marshes, 100 on Jan 7th, 60 on Mar 10th, 61 on Dec 20th. Wanstead Park, 20 on Dec 12th.

Herts: Gobions Wood, 100 on Dec 5th. Little Berkhamsted, 75 on Nov 22nd. Lynsters Farm, 100 on Nov 13th, Potters Crouch, 100 on Mar 19th. Rye Meads RSPB (31). Tyttenhanger GP, 150 on Jan 2nd, 65 on Nov 14th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 128 on Nov 7th. Brent Res, flying over, 16 on Sep 26th, then from Oct 8th-17th, with max 122 on Oct 15th. Harlington Fields, 82 on Jan 30th, 190 on Feb 13th. Horsenden Hill (8-10). Lake Farm CP, (2-3). Trent Park, 200 on Feb 26th & 28th, 100 on Mar 5th & 6th, 80 on Apr 7th.

Kent: Crossness, 60 on Dec 18th. Greenwich Park, 30 on Oct 14th, and flying over, 100 on 18th, 430 on 19th. Sutton at Hone, 17 on Feb 17th.

Surrey: Canons Farm, 400 on Jan 4th. London Wetland Centre, max count of 385 flying over on Oct 10th. Perrots Farm, 300 on Dec 22nd. Walton Res, 24 on Oct 31st, 27 on Dec 21st.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns (2), 14 on Oct 11th, 25 on 18th. Regent's Park, 68 on Feb 15th.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Status: regular autumn migrant and winter visitor, sometimes in large numbers.

These were seen in some very urban surroundings: at Alexandra Park, Gants Hill, Hyde Park, Regent's Park, Stoke Newington Res and Wandsworth Common. The largest flock

was 60 at Canons Farm compared with 1,200 in 2008, 250 in 2007, 100 in 2006, 30+ in 2005, 80 in 2004, 53 in 2003 and 37 in 2002. Most sightings were in October to March. The last of the first winter was on April 19th in Gobions Wood, and the first of the second winter on Oct 8th at London Wetland Centre.

The notes below list the highest counts (of five or more birds) in each winter period, plus other records of interest and all records for sites within the built-up area.

Essex: Bedfords Park, five on Oct 13th. Gants Hill, one on Apr 2nd. Waltham Abbey, one on Mar 13th and Oct 14th. Walthamstow, one on Jan 22nd.

Herts: Brookmans Park, five on Mar 21st & 27th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Apr 5th, max of three in Oct. Brent Res, one to two in Oct. Stoke Newington Res, five on Apr 15th.

Kent: Greenwich Park, one on Oct 14th, two on 18th, 19th & 20th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, five on Oct 28th. Canons Farm, 60 on Jan 4th. Limsfield Chart, five on Mar 28th. London Wetland Centre, five on Oct 27th. Perrots Farm, 20 on Dec 22nd. Walton Res, one on Nov 28th. Wandsworth Common, one on Jan 2nd.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Mar 16th & 17th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 15th.

Serinus serinus

Status: rare vagrant.

In 2008, up to seven were seen at Rainham Marshes so it was no surprise that the only record in 2009 was also from Rainham Marshes.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, up to two females/immatures from Nov 21st to Dec 5th (mo).

Greenfinch Carduelis chloris

Status: common breeding resident and passage migrant.

Again very few breeding records and somewhat fewer records generally were received for Greenfinch in 2009. Whether this again reflects a decline in number, perhaps due to the disease, *Trichomonosis*, which has affected this species particularly since 2005, or is mainly due to reduced recording, is hard to say. The BBS indicates a sharp decline in London since 2006. There was a maximum of 80 birds at Rainham, 60 at Rye Meads and a surprising 75 at a roost count in Springfield Park on January 24th. In 2008, the maximum flock recorded was 149, compared with 350 in 2003, this seems to indicate a trend downwards.

In the notes below, breeding data for sites with three or more pairs (no. of pairs/singing males in brackets), are followed by peak counts of 20 or more birds (within the London boroughs, sites with two or more pairs and lower counts are included).

Essex: Grays, 22 on June 15th (incl ten juv). Orsett, eight juv on June 19th. Highams Park, 40 on Jan 2nd. Hornchurch, 42 on Feb 2nd. Mar Dyke Valley, ten singing males on Feb 18th. Rainham Marshes, between 20 and 80 observed during year. South Park, 60 on Mar 10th and 20 on 18th.

Herts: Cole Green, 45 on Nov 6th. Rye Meads RSPB (8), 60 on Oct 15th. Tyttenhanger GP, 21 on Dec 19th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on Jan 1st, 50+ on Oct 16th. Brent Res, nine on Feb 8th; then flying over, 13 on Oct 13th, 23 on 17th, seven on 23rd. East India Dock Basin, between

four and twelve Jan-Feb. Home Park, 20 on Nov 15th. Gillespie Park NR, three on Apr 10th. Springfield Park, roost count of 75 on Jan 24th. Totteridge Valley, 20 flew over on Oct 22nd. Wormwood Scrubs (15).

Kent: Bexley, 20 on Jan 23rd. Sutton at Hone, 17 on Feb 17th.

Surrey: Garsons/Winterhouse Farm, 20 on Jan 31st, 20 on Feb 14th. Heavers Meadow, 25 on Dec 19th. London Wetland Centre, 39 on Jan 27th, 23 on Feb 27th, 28 on Apr 3rd, 20 on July 21st, 85 flew over on Sep 22nd and 70 on 25th, max of 37 in Oct. Molesey Heath, 43 on Jan 24th, 36 on Feb 28th, 25 on May 1st. Winterhouse Farm, 20 on Jan 31st and Feb 14th.

In Lond: Battersea Rise Cemetery, one on June 1st fledged five young. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, ten on Feb 1st, 15 on Oct 11th.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Status: breeding resident and passage migrant, now common throughout the year.

Now a far more common bird than in the past, the Goldfinch has become a familiar visitor to garden seed feeders. The BBS confirms a steady increase in London since 2001. The highest counts were recorded in autumn and winter, with nine flocks of 100 or more. The highest number of birds recorded was actually in a London borough where a charm of 250 (mostly juveniles) were seen at Wormwood Scrubs on Aug 3rd, which must have been an amazing sight. Another 40 were seen in Paddington Green in Inner London. The maximum flock size has fluctuated considerably between 2002 and 2009 from 110 to 400.

The notes below summarise breeding records (no. of nests/singing males in brackets) followed by peak counts of 50 or more birds (30+ within the London boroughs).

Essex: East Ham, 100 on Feb 26th. Fairlop Waters, 50 on Oct 10th. Grays, five juv on June 15th. Navestock Hall Farm, 50 on Nov 24th. Rainham Marshes, 120 on Jan 25th, 100 on Feb 10th, 70 on Aug 31st, 120 on Sep 8th, between 60 and 80 Oct to Dec. Walthamstow Res, 40 on July 3rd.

Herts: Cole Green Tip, 50 on Sep 19th and Oct 6th. Croxley Common Moor, 30 on Sep 9th (min 18 juv). Maple Lodge NR, 50 on Nov 19th. Rickmansworth, 30 on Sep 19th, juveniles seen from May 9th. Rye Meads RSPB (2). Smallford, 40 on Aug 11th (mostly juveniles). Stocker's Lake, 50 on Oct 11th. Watford, 80 on Jan 16th & 27th.

Middx: Alexandra Park (1). Brent Res, 15 on Feb 8th. East India Dock Basin, between one and five in Jan, one and 12 in Feb, ten on Mar 10th. Gough Park, Forty Hill, 11 on Dec 28th. Park Farm, Enfield, 16 on July 20th, 20 on 25th & 28th and Aug 3rd, 26 on 27th, 30 on Sep 1st. Enfield Town Park, 12 on Jan 12th. Horsenden Hill, recorded all year, with max 88 on Aug 6th. Park Farm, Enfield, 30 July-Aug. Enfield Town Park, 12 on Jan 12th. Southgate, ten on Aug 19th. Totteridge Valley, 25 on Dec 19th. Trent Park (2). Wormwood Scrubs, 250 (mostly juveniles) on Aug 3rd.

Bucks: Colnbrook, 50 on Jan 4th, 110 on Aug 15th.

Kent: College Farm, 17 on Aug 1st. Crossness, 100 on May 29th, 50 on July 25th, up to 80 in Aug, up to 50 in Sep, 40 on Oct 28th. Crossness Southern Marsh, 70 on Aug 17th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 50 on July 1st and 18th, 100 on Aug 3rd, 100 on Nov 1st. Moor Lane, Croydon, one singing on Feb 22nd near Fairfield Hall. Holmethorpe SP, 120 on Dec 25th. London Wetland Centre, 56 on Sep 29th, 58 on Oct 7th and 60 on 11th, 75 on Nov 4th, 64 on Dec 16th. Molesey Heath, 57 on Nov 21st. South Norwood CP, 20

on Sep 7th. Surbiton, 17 on Oct 17th. Walton Res, 90 on July 28th, 110 on Aug 1st, 75 on Sep 3rd and 60 on 16th. Wimbledon Common, 45 on Aug 1st.

In Lond: Battersea Park, two on Feb 12th. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 16 flew over on Apr 16th. Nine Elms, pair bred in small tree outside Sainsbury's. Paddington Green, 20 on Feb 8th and 40 on 10th, nine on Apr 1st, 30 on Sep 14th, 40 on Oct 29th. Regent's Park, 18 on Jan 30th, 60 on Feb 27th, 45 on Mar 6th.

Siskin Carduelis spinus

Status: common winter visitor, passage migrant and increasingly regular in summer and a potential breeding species.

Good numbers were seen in many places around London, particularly in Hertfordshire, as usual, with 120 at Amwell NR on Feb 7th and good numbers in Inner London. The number wintering in London varies from year to year and numbers were lower this year than in 2008. Most birds had left by the end of April. Unusually, a moulting adult was seen on a garden feeder on Aug 28th in Oxhey, Herts, although the first returning bird was on Sep 11th. A flock of 17 at Rickmansworth on Oct 19th was being pursued by 20 Ring-necked Parakeets and one was seen on March 22nd flying over Battersea Power Station. Several urban sites reported birds flying over on passage.

The notes below record peak counts for each winter period of 50 or more birds (20+ within the London boroughs), and other notable sightings.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, 60 on Jan 18th, 52 on Mar 5th and 65 on 15th. Bonnett's Wood, 60 on Jan 6th. Cornmill Meadows, 60 on Oct 28th. Dagenham Chase, nine on Oct 14th. Mayesbrook Park, 70 on Jan 9th. Thorndon CP, 50 on Jan 14th. Wanstead Park, 52 on Jan 2nd, 20 on Nov 22nd. Weald Park, 60 on Jan 6th, 170 on 13th, 200 on 24th, 150 on Feb 7th, 50 on Nov 3rd.

Herts: Aldenham Res, 80 on Dec 31st. Amwell NR, 100 on Jan 25th, 50 on Feb 15th, 120 on Feb 7th. Bell Bar 65 on Jan 4th. Cassiobury Park, 100 on Jan 10th, 60 on Feb 8th. Colney Heath, 60 on Jan 7th, 120 on Dec 12th. Croxley Common Moor, 50 on Jan 7th. Hertingfordbury, 60 on Feb 6th. Howe Green, 50 on Feb 1st. Maple Lodge NR, max of 100 on Jan 29th and Feb 6th. North Mymms Park, 50 on Feb 7th. Seventy Acres Lake, 50 on Feb 7th. St Albans, 50 on Dec 27th. Stanborough Lakes, 50 on Jan 9th Stocker's Lake, max of 100 on Jan 15th & 30th and on Feb 2nd-3rd. Tyttenhanger GP, 100 on Jan 13th, 120 on Dec 12th. Willowmead, 60 on Feb 15th.

Middx: Alexandra Park, 22 on Jan 1st, 25 on Sep 12th. Bushy Park, 55 on Feb 1st and 75 on 11th.

Bucks: Horton GP, 50 on Feb 2nd and 70 on Feb 6th, 60 on Mar 10th.

Kent: Foots Cray Meadows, 60 on Jan 23rd. Greenwich Park, 17 on Oct 19th. Sevenoaks WR, 90 on Jan 17th, 60 on 24th, 220 on Feb 25th, 50 on Mar 1st & 4th, 60 on Dec 16th, 110 on 31st. Sutton at Hone, 20 on Jan 6th, 55 on Feb 17th.

Surrey: Broadwater Lake, 51 on Feb 22nd. Holmethorpe SP, 100 on Feb 22nd. King George's Park, 42 on Jan 7th. London Wetland Centre, 52 on Oct 27th. Wandsworth Common, 25 on Jan 2nd.

In Lond: Battersea, one on Mar 22nd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Jan 5th, nine on Feb 5th, six on 18th, two on Mar 9th, 16 on 11th, one on Oct 18th, three on Nov 4th. Paddington Green, one on Nov 5th. Regent's Park, Max of 20 in January, max of

15 in Feb, max of ten in Mar, 14 on Apr 14th, one on Oct 14th, ten on Nov 5th, 12 on 6th, one on Dec 4th. Rotherhithe, two on Jan 10th.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Status: common but declining breeding resident and passage migrant.

There were exactly 500 reports during the year, with 65% of the records relating to flocks of <10 individuals. The highest counts were made in the Essex sector, with two totals of 300 or more coming from Rainham Marshes in Oct and Dec. Despite the plea in the 2008 report, breeding reports were almost identical to that year, with positive news from 21 sites, suggesting a minimum breeding population of 42 territories. The majority of the territory counts were made at Wormwood Scrubs (12). The sector summaries include all counts of 50 or more, all Inner London records and two or more breeding pairs/territories shown in brackets.

Essex: Barking Bay, 200 on Dec 8th. Fairlop Waters, 90+ on June 17th and 100 on Oct 10th. Ingrebourne Valley, 70 on Sep 6th and 90 on Oct 4th. Rainham Marshes, 210 on Feb 4th, 70 on July 25th, 100 on Aug 6th, 70 on Sep 8th, 300 on Oct 21st, 170 on Nov 21st and 311 on Dec 20th. Warren Gorge, 58 on Feb 1st. Wennington, 120 on Mar 14th.

Herts: Hatfield Garden Village, 73 on Dec 23rd. Nashes Farm, 50 on Oct 11th and 76 on Oct 13th. Smallford (3+). Tyttenhanger GP, 70 on Jan 18th, up to 104 in Dec. West End, Essendon, 66 on Oct 12th.

Middx: Brent Res, visible migration evident in Oct. Horsenden Hill (2). Wormwood Scrubs (12).

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, 120 on Sep 14th.

Kent: College Farm (2). Crossness (7), 110 on July 26th, 90 on Aug 30th and 100 on Sep 9th. Dartford Marshes, 50 on Jan 18th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, 91 on Jan 1st, 50 on 17th and 60 on Dec 1st. Canons Farm, 125 on Oct 11th. Holmethorpe SP, 140-200 birds from Jan 31st to Mar 22nd. London Wetland Centre, 25 records for the year with 75 on Oct 29th and 55 next day. Moat Farm, 80 on Apr 5th. Ridlands, 80 on Aug 27th, 90 on Oct 4th & 18th, 60 on Dec 7th. Trenchleys, 50 on Mar 1st. Walton Res, 105 on Feb 5th, 160 on Dec 8th and 80 on 12th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Jan 11th, Apr 15th & 20th, May 14th, Oct 11th & 25th, Nov 5th. Paddington Green, two over on Oct 21st. Regent's Park, singles on Mar 17th, 25th & 30th and Apr 6th, two on Apr 14th and Oct 17th.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Status: scarce, late autumn and winter visitor.

As in 2008, the only record concerned an individual at Rainham Marshes on several dates in November.

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Nov 11th (PSt), 16th (JL), 17th & 21st (HV).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Status: former breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Just over 500 reports were received, with about 62% of these relating to single figure groups. The largest group reported was of 150 at Thorndon CP on Jan 14th. There were

an additional 46 reports of unidentified redpolls, the majority of which presumably related to this species. All reports of ten or more individuals and all Inner London records are shown.

Essex: Bedfords Park, 25 on Oct 26th, 20 on Oct 27th. Belhus Woods CP, 13 on Mar 5th and 15th, ten on Mar 30th and 11 on Nov 22nd. Childerditch, ten on Nov 7th. Cornmill Meadows, 20 on Apr 11th. Mayesbrook Park, 25 on Jan 9th. Roding Valley Park, 18 on Feb 12th. Thorndon CP, 150 on Jan 14th, 48 on Feb 1st and 70 on Nov 10th. Upminster, ten on Dec 17th. Wanstead/Wanstead Flats, 16 on Dec 16th. Wanstead Park, 14 on Mar 5th and c30 on Nov 29th. Warren Gorge, 14 on Jan 4th, ten on Feb 7th. Weald Park, 35 on Jan 13th and 17 on 24th. West Thurrock Marshes, 20 on Feb 3rd.

Herts: Amwell NR, 20 on Nov 28th, 15 on Dec 16th. Bencroft Wood, 20 on Mar 16th. Hatfield, 25+ on Nov 29th. Hatfield Park, 53 on Nov 29th and 11 on Dec 22nd. Loudwater, 17 on Dec 15th. Northaw Great Wood, 12 on Jan 18th. Redwell Wood Farm, 32 on Jan 24th. Rickmansworth, up to 12 in a garden on several dates between Mar 8th & 18th, with maximum of 12 on Mar 12th and between Dec 28th & 29th, with 12 on Dec 28th.

Middx: Abney Park Cemetery LNR, 18 on Mar 2nd. Alexandra Park, 35 during Jan and Feb. Brent Res, evidence of small scale visible migration from Oct 8th-31st, 25 on Dec 5th & 18th. Springfield Park, 16 on Nov 5th. Trent Park, 17 on Jan 6th, 18 on 14th. Vicarage Farm, 15 on Dec 3rd.

Bucks: Black Park, 20 on Mar 12th. Horton GP, ten on Mar 28th.

Kent: Brasted, 15 on Feb 8th. Foots Cray Meadows, 20 on Mar 12th. Joyden's Wood, 30 on Feb 25th and ten on Mar 5th.

Surrey: Arbrook Common, 15 on Feb 10th. Beddington Farmlands, recorded on 21 occasions between Oct 1st and Dec 10th with maximum of 30 on Dec 1st. Burwood Park, 60 on Jan 12th. Esher Common, 12 on Mar 3rd. Holmethorpe SP, 17 on Apr 7th and 20 on Nov 9th. Limpsfield Chart, ten on Jan 24th. London Wetland Centre, recorded more-or-less throughout Feb and Mar with maximum of 73 on Feb 25th and 23 additional double figure counts; 29 records in autumn/winter with maximum of 21 on Oct 29th and some visible migration noted. Park Downs, 30 on Dec 22nd. Purley Beeches, 20 on Mar 14th. Wandsworth Common, 40 on Dec 16th. Wimbledon Common, 20+ on Mar 3rd and Apr 18th, 55 on Nov 15th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, two on Feb 5th and Mar 11th, one on Oct 11th, one on Nov 4th. Regent's Park, one on Mar 16th, two on Apr 16th, three on Oct 18th, one on 22nd, five on Nov 9th, one on 10th, four on 11th and one on Dec 1st. St James's Park, one on Oct 22nd.

Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis flammaea*

Status: scarce irruptive winter visitor.

Reports of this species continue to increase, presumably in part due to increased observer awareness. There were 52 reports for the year, though some were duplicates, with birds present for several days. The London Wetland Centre fared best and held groups of five at both ends of the year.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, two on Mar 30th. Hall Marsh, one on Mar 19th. Thorndon CP, two on Feb 1st.

Herts: Bowyer's Water, one on Mar 19th. Broxbourne Woods, one on Dec 13th. Cole Green, two on Nov 6th. Rickmansworth, one on Mar 8th. St Albans, two on Dec 28th.

Middx: Abney Park Cemetery LNR, one on Mar 2nd. Alexandra Park, one on Feb 3rd. Trent Park, one on Apr 21st.

Bucks: Horton GP, minimum of three from Feb 2nd-Mar 9th. Wraysbury GP, one on Feb 10th, a different bird on Feb 28th, probably the birds from Horton GP.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one on Mar 8th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Dec 1st and 6th. Bookham Common, two on Feb 13th. London Wetland Centre, in Feb four on 11th then seen on eight dates to the month end with maximum of five on 13th & 20th; in March seen on eight dates with maximum four on two occasions; 1-5 on 14 dates between Oct 18th and Dec 23rd.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Status: irruptive visitor, rare breeding species (usually following irruptions).

There were 57 reports during the year with 45% in July. Eleven of the reports concerned double figure groups, with a maximum of 34 at Hatfield Park on July 19th. A good year and a similar picture to 2008. All reports are shown below.

Essex: Aveley, five W on July 16th. Chafford Hundred, one N on July 2nd. Dagenham, three W on July 26th, four on July 30th. Gidea Park, four on Oct 13th. High Beach, three on July 18th. Ilford, a pair on Mar 17th. Ingrebourne Valley, six W on July 21st. Little Warley Common, six on Oct 18th. Rainham Marshes, two on Aug 3rd and 13 on Oct 21st. Thorndon CP, 12 on July 23rd. Wanstead Flats, three on Aug 9th. Woodford Green, 12 on July 18th.

Herts: Amwell NR, one on Sep 19th, nine W on Oct 11th and one over on Oct 18th. Bell Bar, three on July 12th. Broxbourne Woods, six on July 19th, eight on July 23rd, two on Oct 13th and five on Dec 13th. Garston, three W on Oct 2nd. Hatfield Park, nine on Feb 15th, 34 on July 19th and 23 on Dec 31st. North Mymms Park, five on Oct 10th.

*This pale Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis flammea* with a Lesser Redpoll *C cabaret* at Rickmansworth in March recalls Arctic Redpoll *C hornemanni*, but the rarer species lacks the heavy bill and bold flank streaking. (Andrew Moon)*



Verulamium Park, ten S on July 19th. Woodside, 18 on July 19th, two on Nov 29th and four on Dec 31st.

Middx: Alexandra Park, one on July 22nd. Potters Bar, seven W on July 25th. Stoke Newington Res, two S on July 31st. Trent Park, one on July 18th.

Bucks: Black Park, 30 on Sep 19th, 25 on Oct 11th and 15 on Dec 25th.

Kent: Joyden's Wood, nine on Jan 13th, one on Jan 20th, eight on Feb 19th and six on July 24th. Sidcup, one E on June 19th.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, five on July 13th. London Wetland Centre, five NW on July 13th, one S on Dec 15th. Richmond Park, five E on July 8th and 15+ E on July 19th. Wimbledon Common, three W on Feb 22nd.

In Lond: Burgess Park, three on June 3rd. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, 2+ on Oct 21st, the first at this site since 1972. Regent's Park, three W on Aug 2nd.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Status: fairly common breeding resident.

The analysis below shows all groups of five or more, along with a summary of breeding territories in brackets. As usual, breeding reports of this unobtrusive bird are likely to under represent its status, with just 20 sites reporting territories. An alternative analysis of the data shows that 51 sites held birds in the period April to July, which may give a better idea of the breeding status. Bullfinch remains a very uncommon bird in Inner London and there were no reports for that sector in 2009.

Essex: Recorded from 25 sites. Merrymeade CP, six on Dec 30th. Nazeing Church, five on Dec 9th. Stanford Rivers, seven on Nov 25th.

Herts: Recorded from 42 sites. Bell Bar (1), six on July 12th. Bernards Heath (1). Cole Green, nine on Nov 6th, eight on Nov 14th and five on Nov 22nd. Essendon, five on Jan 7th and Dec 18th. Hatfield Park, five on Dec 18th. Howe Green, six on Dec 5th. Leavesdon Green, ten on Dec 5th. London Colney (1). Marshalswick, six on Nov 19th. Merry Hill, seven on Jan 1st. Redwell Wood Farm, eight on Jan 3rd. Rickmansworth (1). St Albans (1). Tyttenhanger GP, five on Nov 21st. Welham Green (1), six on July 12th.

Middx: Brent Res, five on Mar 21st, two overhead migrants on Oct 13th. Horsenden Hill (10), five on Jan 10th and July 13th, seven on Dec 23rd. Totteridge Valley (1+), five on Nov 30th. Trent Park (1), five on Jan 22nd. Vicarage Farm (1).

Bucks: Wraybury GP, two on Nov 9th was the only record received for the sector.

Kent: Reported from just two sites. Chipstead Lake, seven on Dec 24th.

Surrey: Recorded from 16 sites. Holmethorpe SP (2), 11 on Oct 18th. Prince's Coverts (4), eight on May 20th, ten on June 23rd.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Status: very scarce breeding resident; occasional passage migrant.

In contrast to 2008, there were no reports of breeding this year and numbers were down on the previous year, assuming the Bookham Common birds relate to the birds present at the end of 2008. The record from Regent's Park was notable.

Essex: Fairlop Waters, two Nov 6th (DE-H). Woodford Green, one Jan 19th (KM_y).

Middx: Lake Farm CP, a male on Mar 1st (PN).

Kent: Bexleyheath, one on Apr 14th (BG).

Surrey: Bookham Common, three on Jan 30th and Feb 13th (SJS), two on Mar 7th (AC, DH). Prince's Coverts, up to six from Feb 18th to Mar 28th (ML). Wimbledon Common, one on Oct 15th (MM).

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on Apr 5th (ARD).

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Status: rare, but annual, autumn and winter visitor.

Just one record this year.

Essex: Rainham Marshes NR, single on Oct 30th flew low east over silt lagoons calling at 07:32 (DCn).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Status: scarce autumn and winter visitor.

Two records this year.

Essex: Rainham Marshes NR, single on Nov 9th (AT *et al*) was photographed.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one flew WSW on Oct 20th (JPA).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Status: widespread but declining breeding resident, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A minimum of 48-51 territories/singing males reported represented a significant decrease on 2008 (73). The survey data from Kent yielded an impressive nine territories whilst Herts was surely under recording with just 13-14 pairs (52 - 2008). Essex and Surrey returns were disappointing but Enfield again allows the species to maintain a possible breeding toehold in Middx with an impressive winter flock too. As the map below shows, the Yellowhammer is now mostly restricted to the edge of our recording area.

The following account lists all breeding records (in brackets the number of breeding pairs, singing males or territories); also maximum counts for the year for all localities with flocks containing ten or more individuals (sector peak if fewer), except for Middx, Bucks, Kent and Inner London, where its scarcity merits mention of all records.

Essex: Bonnetts Wood, 12 on Feb 27th, a pair on July 3rd. Bulphan Fen (1). Cely Woods (1). Fairlop Waters, one on four dates Jan-Mar. Hastingwood (1). Ingrebourne Valley, 34 on Dec 26th. Netherhouse Farm (2). Orsett (2-3) with 15 on Jan 15th. Theydon Garnon (1). Wanstead Flats, juv female on Sep 13th.

Herts: Bedmond (1). Beech Farm GP (1). Brookmans Park, 30 on Jan 31st. Cole Green, 24+ on Nov 6th. Croxley Green (1). Jersey Farm (1-2). Micklefield Hall, 20 on Dec 15th. North Mymms Park, c28 on Feb 7th. Redwell Wood Farm, c45 on Jan 24th, 25+ on Feb 7th. Rye Meads RSPB, 20 on Jan 2nd and Nov 6th. Salisbury Hall Farm, (1). Smallford (6). Tyttenhanger Farm, 50+ on Jan 9th, 44 on Jan 16th. Tyttenhanger GP, 26 on Dec 11th. Welham Green (1). Woodoaks Farm, 15 on Nov 27th.

Middx: Enfield area: Ferny Hill Farm; seven records Nov 26th - Dec 31st included 40-50 in one flock Dec 3rd-5th, the observer's highest Enfield count for 6-7 years; Parkside

Farm, seven records Mar 31st - Sep 1st, all singles bar a pair on Mar 31st; Vicarage Farm (1-2) with four Oct 19th-21st.

Kent: Chelsfield (1). Chipstead Lake, three on July 4th. Cudham (1). Lullingstone (3). New Stables Farm (2). Otford to Filston, six on June 16th. Sevenoaks WR, one on Oct 25th. Sutton at Hone, one on Jan 6th.

Surrey: Ashted Common (2). Beddington Farmlands, one on Oct 28th. Chasemoor Farm (2). Epsom Common (3). Farthing Downs (3+). Holmethorpe SP, max of 32 on Jan 25th. London Wetland Centre, one on Oct 18th. Park Farm (1). Riddlesdown (3+). Rushett Farm (2+).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Status: fairly common but declining breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

At least 99-100 singing males/territories, about half the total of 198 in 2008 (270 - 2006). Essex, Herts and Surrey again yielded the vast majority of these records whilst totals of 13-14 for Middx and just nine for the Kent sectors were hugely disappointing compared to as recently as 2007 when both had a minimum of 39 each. No records again for Bucks. A number of sites such as Ingrebourne Valley in Essex did not provide territorial totals yet had over ten singing males in 2006.

All sites with breeding pairs or singing males/territories are itemised (shown in brackets). All Bucks, Kent, Inner London and Middx records and occurrences of ten or more birds in maximum counts are detailed below.

Essex: Belhus Woods CP (3). Bonnetts Wood, one on Jan 6th. Cornmill Meadows (2+). Fairlop Waters, max five in Jan. Ingrebourne Valley, 56 on Dec 22nd. Mar Dyke Valley (2). Rainham Marshes (10+), with three juvs seen and 46 on Dec 23rd. Walthamstow Res (1), recently fledged downy young seen in late May. Wanstead Flats (2). Warren Gorge (1).

Herts: Amwell NR, max of six during breeding season. Beech Farm GP (3). Maple Lodge (2). Otterspool (2). Panshanger Park (1). Rye Meads RSPB (16) with 50 on Dec 5th. Tyttenhanger GP (1). Watford (1) with three young seen.

Middx: Alexandra Park, singles on seven dates June 6th - Sep 16th. Bow Creek, max five on Jan 2nd. Brent Res (3). East India Dock Basin, six on Dec 31st. Enfield area: Ferny Hill Farm (1); Parkside Farm (1); Vicarage Farm, several records max two. Horsenden Hill (3). Kempton NR (1), with seven on Dec 24th. Lake Farm CP (2). Staines Moor, six plus on Oct 10th. Tottenham Marshes (3-4), with seven on Dec 22nd.

Kent: Crossness (3). Swanscombe (6).

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands (2), with 15 on Jan 3rd and Dec 20th. Black Pond (3). Epsom Common (1). Esher Common (2). Harlington Fields, 75 on Feb 13th. Horton CP (1). London Wetland Centre (10), with 28 on Apr 13th including 26 flying NW. Mitcham Common (1). Molesey Heath (1). Morden Hall Park (1). Richmond Park (3). South Norwood CP (1). Walton Res (2). Wimbledon Common, six on Nov 15th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, singles on Oct 18th, 21st and Nov 3rd.

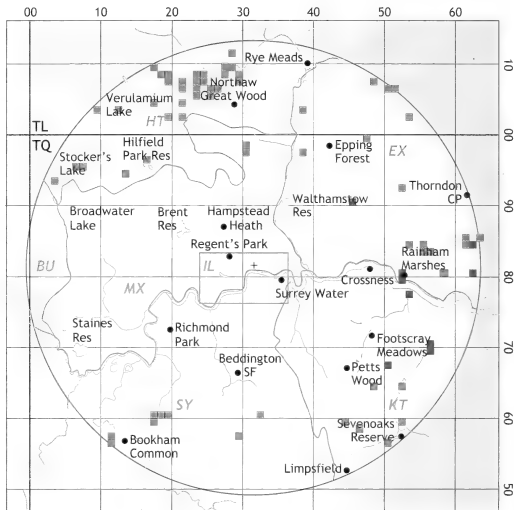
Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Status: declining and increasingly localised breeding resident.

Recorded from eleven sites this year (seven in 2008) with a minimum of five territories/singing birds. The species retains a meagre breeding existence but records

Yellowhammer and Corn Bunting records

- Yellowhammer (April-August incl)
- Corn Bunting (April-August incl)
- LNHS Area
- County boundaries



GIGL

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Greater London
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from four sites in Kent was positive. Rainham Marshes again had up to four wintering birds at both ends of the year. As the map under Yellowhammer shows, the Corn Bunting is now restricted to the eastern edge of our recording area.

Essex: Bulphan Fen, three males on Apr 25th, one on May 25th. Fairlop Waters, four sightings with singles on May 9th & 13th, two on 14th and four Nov 15th. Grey Goose Farm, singles on Apr 4th and May 8th. Mar Dyke Valley, one on June 16th. Orsett (3): Green Lane, records on seven dates from Apr-Aug, with three males calling on July 5th, five on Aug 5th; Baker Street, one on May 4th. Rainham Marshes, six records from Jan 1st to Apr 18th, max four on Jan 1st; six records from Oct 25th to Dec 22nd with max of four.

Kent: Crockenhill (2). Crayford Marshes, one on Apr 19th. South Darenth, at least one on Apr 13th. Swanscombe, two on Jan 1st.

APPENDIX I: ESCAPES

The following records relate to birds known, or presumed, to be of captive origin. In addition to those listed, there are fully-winged individuals of several species of wildfowl in collections such as at St James's Park and Bushy Park.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Essex: Dagenham Chase, one on Apr 26th. Eagle Pond, two on June 9th. Mayesbrook Park, one on Mar 8th. Netherhall GP, one on Nov 21st.

Herts: Cheshunt GPs, 1 to 2 throughout year.

Middx: Brent Res, one on Jan 24th.

Kent: Crossness, two on Apr 26th, May 4th. Southmere Lake one on Feb 22nd.

Surrey: Hurst Park, one on Sep 22nd.

In Lond: Paddington Green, six flew over on Mar 26th. Greenland Dock, one on Aug 13th, 19th, Oct 1st, 7th, 12th. St James's Park, one on nest on Oct 20th.

Coscoroba Swan *Coscoroba coscoroba*

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Nov 12th.

Swan Goose *Anser cygnoides*

Essex: Walthamstow Res, one regularly June 12th to July 28th, Oct 8th & 15th, Dec 18th & 31st.

Middx: Brent Res, one on Apr 16th.

Surrey: Holmethorpe SP, one on Aug 5th.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on May 1st.

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, one on Oct 29th.

Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, one on Sep 4th.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Herts: Essendon, one Dec 18th. Hatfield Park, one on June 28th, Sep 27th, Nov 8th & 29th. Hatfield, three on Feb 15th, two on May 22nd, singles on July 19th, Nov 29th and Dec 13th. Hertford, one on Dec 27th. Hilfield Park Res, singles on June 4th, 7th, 8th & 11th. Howe Green, one on Dec 5th. Rye Meads RSPB, singles on Aug 8th & 29th, Sep 26th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Oct 20th and Dec 13th. Verulamium Park, one on May 6th.

Middx: Brent Res, one on May 31st.

Surrey: London Wetland Centre, four on Jan 1st, one on Apr 17th, three from Apr 30th to May 1st, seven on Aug 10th, six on Aug 12th & 24th, three on Sep 4th and seven on Oct 4th and Dec 27th. Trevereux, one from Jan 20th until Feb 2nd. Walton Res, one on Apr 12th.

Emperor Goose *Anser canagicus*

Surrey: Clapham Common, one on Mar 4th, London Wetland Centre, one on Mar 11th, May 1st, Aug 12th, 24th, Sep 4th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Feb 16th, Mar 2nd, Apr 15th, Oct 25th, Nov 30th.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Essex: High Beach, one on July 18th. Rainham Marshes, one May 11th to 13th. Walthamstow Res, one on Apr 19th, then from June 28th was present most of the time to the year end.

Herts: Amwell NR, one Sep 19th to Oct 11th. Essendon, one Aug 13th. Hertford, one on Nov 17th and Dec 8th. Lynsters Lake, one on Mar 25th. Panshanger Park, one on Dec 2nd. Radlett, one on Mar 26th & 29th. Rush Green, one on Jan 11th.

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one on Mar 18th, Apr 1st & 4th, June 7th; this last bird bred with a Greylag producing one hybrid gosling.

Surrey: Walton Res, present throughout the year with a maximum of c9; breeding took place.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Oct 18th, 20th, 21st, 25th & 31st.

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one on Nov 26th.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Essex: Barking Bay, one on June 7th, 28th, Aug 4th, 6th, 12th, 27th. Beckton SW, one on Aug 15th. Holyfield Hall Farm, one on Mar 6th. Rainham Marshes, one on June 1st, 16th.

Herts: Radlett Aero GP, a female on 12 dates from Mar 25th to Apr 21st. Tyttenhanger GP, one Mar 26th to Nov 2nd, two on Apr 20th, a pair on Sep 6th.

Middx: Stoke Newington Res, one flew E with Common Shelduck on May 10th.

Kent: Crossness, a female on May 31st to June 29th, Aug 1st to 30th. R. Thames, Erith, a female on June 1st.

Paradise Shelduck *Tadorna variegata*

Middx: Kempton NR, one over on Jan 30th, one on Feb 8th, Mar 8th.

Surrey: Walton Res, one on May 5th, 9th.

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

Essex: Connaught Water, three males, one female on Mar 15th, 22nd, 24th, two on Mar 30th, Oct 11th, one on Apr 24th, three on Sep 21st. Knighton Wood, one on Nov 5th.

Herts: Hertingfordbury, one on Jan 13th.

Kent: Folkestone Gardens, a female on Feb 28th.

Surrey: Richmond Park, a male on May 6th, one on Sep 16th. South Norwood CP, one on Sep 14th.

In Lond: Norway Dock, Rotherhithe, a female on Feb 11th, 21st.

Yellow-billed Pintail *Anas georgica*

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Aug 24th-25th.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Surrey: QE II Res, a male on a number of dates between Mar 19th and Aug 24th.
Wandsworth Common, a male on Nov 14th.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*

Essex: Connaught Water, one on Apr 24th.

Chiloe Wigeon *Anas sibilatrix*

Kent: Bradbourne Lakes, one on Jan 18th, Apr 4th.

Bahama Pintail *Anas bahamensis*

Herts: Aldenham Res, singles on Mar 15th, May 10th, June 13th. Broad Colney, one on Nov 8th, Dec 9th. Hilfield Park Res, one on July 11th. London Colney, one on Jan 10th. Rye Meads RSPB, singles on Jan 31st, Mar 11th & 28th, Apr 4th, 5th & 11th and July 22nd. Tyttenhanger GP, singles on Aug 2nd, 7th & 30th, Sep 23rd & 26th, and Dec 5th & 13th.

Australian Shoveler *Anas rhynchos*

Surrey: Frays Wildfowl Lake, a male on Feb 25th.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

Middx: Staines Res, one thought to be the long staying escape/hybrid from Berkshire on Mar 6th & 7th, June 29th.

New Zealand Scaup *Aythya novaeseelandiae*

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one fully-winged drake on Round Pond on Mar 9th.

Red-Crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Essex: Connaught Water, male on Jan 24th, 26th, Mar 24th, Apr 15th.

Middx: Bushy Park/Home Park, present through the year with a maximum of 25 on Dec 28th.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, a leucistic drake on Oct 29th. Wraybury GP, the leucistic drake was present in the area from Oct 2nd to 31st.

Surrey: Richmond Park, Pen Ponds, two on Feb 22nd, Mar 15th, 20th, one on June 1st.

In Lond: Buckingham Palace, bred. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, present through the year with breeding taking place. A maximum of 40 occurred in Dec when birds from Regent's Park, disturbed by work on their favourite island, transferred. Paddington Green, a drake over S on Sep 14th. Regent's Park, present throughout the year with a maximum of 65 on Oct 11th, breeding took place. St James's Park, 25 on Sep 9th, 18 on Nov 22nd.

Ringed Teal *Callonetta leucophrys*

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one on Jan 7th.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Herts: Rabley Park Farm, four on Jan 17th. St Albans, two on Apr 3rd & 17th, June 22nd and Dec 1st. Verulamium Lake, up to three throughout the year.



*The Lower Thames holds good numbers of Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, and the gathering at Barking Bay also attracted this female Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* of unknown origin. (David Morrison)*

Common Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*

Essex: Belhus Woods CP, male displaying to Fieldfares on Feb 22nd. Hastingwood, three high in trees on Nov 6th. Navestock Church, three on Nov 24th.

Herts: Bayford, one on Apr 4th. Hatfield Park, 1-8 between May and Dec. Jersey Farm, one on Apr 26th & 28th. Tyttenhanger GP, one on Apr 18th. Woodside, one on Apr 15th, May 9th, June 29th, two on June 7th.

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*

Herts: Bayford, nine on Apr 4th. Bell Bar, 14 on Jan 4th. Brookmans Park, four on Feb 28th, two on Apr 5th. Essendon, singles on Jan 7th, Feb 8th, Apr 7th & 25th, July 4th, and Dec 18th. Redwell Wood Farm, two on Apr 14th. South Mimms, one on Jan 8th. Welham Green, eight on Dec 12th. Wildhill, four on Aug 15th, one on Oct 10th.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Essex: Netherhouse Farm, one with jesses on Feb 11th, 25th, Mar 11th. Wanstead Park, male with jesses on Apr 23rd.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on Feb 8th to 21st, Mar 1st.

Surrey: Trevereux, one on Apr 1st, hybridised, probably with Common Buzzard, two young, one surviving into 2010.

Lanner *Falco biarmicus*

Herts: Tyttenhanger GP, escaped bird from Willow's Farm on May 2nd.

Falcon sp

Herts: Amwell NR, escaped falconer's bird on Jan 19th.

Middx: Stoke Newington Res, one with prey - Gyr or Gyr x Saker on Apr 20th, same bird on May 13th.

Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus*

Herts: Rye Meads, one on June 8th. Frogmore GP, one on Mar 11th.

Middx: Brent Res, one over on Oct 8th. Staines Res, one over on Aug 15th.

Bucks: Horton GP, one over on May 4th.

Kent: Crossness, one on Feb 15th. Lewisham, one on July 3rd.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on June 9th, July 1st.

Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*

Middx: Brent Res, one on May 14th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on July 26th.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua galerita*

Herts: Rye Meads, one on June 8th.

Lovebird sp

Herts: Garston, one on Aug 12th, the observer suspects that it was the Peach-faced species.

Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus*

Herts: Borehamwood, up to 39 still resident here (peak of 55 in 2008). Bushey, two on Apr 9th, four on Oct 30th. Elstree, 15 on Dec 19th, two on 25th. Hilfield Park Res, one on Apr 11th and May 21st, three on Apr 12th. Letchmore Heath, one on Apr 11th. Well End, 15 over S on Oct 2nd.

Middx: Southall, three on Feb 19th.

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one on Oct 7th.

Orange-winged Amazon *Amazona amazonica*

Middx: Springfield Park, one on Oct 11th, bird present into 2010. Trent Park, one on Jan 30th, Feb 13th, 21st.

Sun Conure *Aratinga solstitialis*

Essex: Mar Dyke Valley, one on July 22nd.

Red-faced Liocichla *Liocichla phoenicea*

Herts: Hoddesdon, one on Jan 31st.

Red-backed Thrush *Zoothera erythronota*

Bucks: Wraybury Village, one ringed and photographed on Oct 29th.

APPENDIX II: HYBRIDS

The following records relate to wild or feral hybrids.

All but one hybrid goose reported this year were **Canada Goose x Domestic Goose** and **Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** or unidentified, and mainly as part of WeBS reports. As there are so many of these, it has been decided not to give a detailed report.

White-fronted Goose x Bar-headed Goose

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, one free-flying hybrid on Feb 11th, Mar 2nd, 16th.

Wigeon x Pintail

Essex: Rainham Marshes, a male on Dec 7th.

Aythya hybrids

Essex: KGV Res, one female Scaup like hybrid on Nov 15th.

Herts: Aldenham Res, one on Feb 14th, 17th. Amwell NR, two hybrids, one probably Pochard x Tufted Duck (resembling a Scaup) the other thought to be Scaup x Pochard present in both winters. Hampermill Lake, one on July 14th. Hilfield Park Res, one thought to be Tufted x Pochard on Feb 14th-16th, one presumed Tufted x Scaup on Dec 13th, 20th. Stocker's Lake, Scaup-type hybrid on Feb 8th.

Middx: KGV Res, drake Pochard x Tufted on Nov 8th. Littleton, drake presumed Greater Scaup x Tufted on Nov 21st. Q. Mary Res, Lesser Scaup type hybrid on Jan 11th. Staines Res, drake Pochard hybrid on Jan 17th-18th, Feb 14th-15th, Apr 13th, July 10th to 13th, female with large blaze of white above bill, tuft on head on Mar 14th. Stoke Newington Res, female Scaup x Tufted Duck on Jan 2nd, Nov 12th to year end, male Ring-necked Duck x Tufted Duck on Nov 24th present on and off to year end.

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, drake thought to be Tufted x Ferruginous on Oct 16th; a first-winter female Ferruginous type on Oct 31st, Nov 1st, a drake Lesser Scaup type on Dec 16th, 23rd.

Surrey: Beddington Farmlands, one on Jan 12th, 13th. Holmethorpe SP, a male Scaup type hybrid on Jan 7th; another hybrid on Mar 24th & 25th, Apr 6th & 13th. London Wetland Centre, Ring-necked x Tufted Duck on Dec 14th to 25th. QE II Res, a male Lesser Scaup type on Apr 1st. Savay Lake, a Tufted Duck x Pochard hybrid on Feb 25th. Walton Res, a drake Redhead type on Apr 12th.

Falcon Hybrid

Essex: Rainham Marshes, hybrid Gyr type falcon on Sep 29th.

White-winged Gull Hybrid

Bucks: Q. Mother Res, one on Feb 3rd, 4th, 8th and Mar 26th.

Carrion Crow x Hooded Crow

Kent: Sevenoaks WR, one on Mar 16th, 20th.

APPENDIX III: NON-PROVEN AND NON-SUBMITTED RECORDS

Non-proven records

The following records were submitted to the London Natural History Society but have not been accepted, either by the British Birds Rarities Committee or by our Rarities Committee.

2009

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Bewick's Swan | London Wetland Centre | Dec 23rd |
| Leach's Storm-petrel | Staines Res | Nov 25th |
| White Stork | Cobham | Feb 10th |
| Honey Buzzard | Ewell | Sep 18th |
| Hen Harrier | Laleham | Jan 3rd |
| Montagu's Harrier | Regent's Park | Sep 9th |
| (Accepted as Harrier sp) | | |
| Eleanora's Falcon | Rainham Marshes | Sep 20th |
| Eleanora's Falcon | Great Warley | Oct 5th |
| Caspian Gull | London Wetland Centre | May 14th, 29th |
| Alpine Swift | Lambeth | July 10th |
| Penduline Tit | Ingrebourne Valley | Mar 8th |
| Golden Oriole | Horsenden Hill | May 9th |
| Hooded Crow | Roehampton | May 10th |
| Little Bunting | Wormwood Scrubs | Jan 6th |

Non-submitted records

The following records have been reported but to date no details have been received by the London Natural History Society. Photos, descriptions (or notes where appropriate) for any of these records would be welcomed, so that in due course they may be published as accepted records.

2009

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Whooper Swan | Sevenoaks WR | Mar 4th |
| Whooper Swan | London Wetland Centre | Jan 4th |
| Wild Swan sp | Walthamstow Res | Dec 12th |
| Bean Goose | Rainham Marshes | Apr 30th |
| Pink footed Goose | Warren Gorge | Sep 21st |
| Gannet | Lewisham | Oct 5th |
| Gannet | Sevenoaks NR | Sep 30th |
| Gannet | Rainham Marshes | Oct 5th, 6th |
| Purple Heron | Hackney Marshes | Apr 25th |
| White Stork | Hornchurch | Aug 28th |
| Honey Buzzard | Harold Hill | July 28th |
| Honey Buzzard | Orsett | Oct 12th |
| Honey Buzzard | Rainham Marshes | Sep 24th, 27th, Oct 1st, 2nd, 11th |
| Honey Buzzard | Upshire | May 31st |
| Honey Buzzard | Bromley | May 22nd |
| Honey Buzzard | Horsenden Hill | Sep 22nd |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Honey Buzzard | Regent's Park | Sep 20th |
| Honey Buzzard | New Oxford Street | June 6th |
| Hen Harrier | Iver Heath | Mar 29th |
| Hen Harrier | Brasted | Feb 20th |
| Montagu's Harrier | Mar Dyke Valley | Sep 11th |
| Montagu's Harrier | Rainham Marshes | Sep 20th |
| Goshawk | Epping Forest | Mar 3rd |
| Goshawk | Holyfield Hall Farm | Apr 22nd |
| Goshawk | Rainham Marshes | Apr 13th, 21st, Sep 11th, 12th, 19th |
| Goshawk | Woodford Green | May 3rd |
| Goshawk | Claybury Park | Mar 29th |
| Goshawk | Holyfield Hall Farm | Apr 1st |
| Goshawk | Wormwood Scrubs | Sep 18th |
| Goshawk | St James's Park | Mar 3rd |
| Merlin | Claybury Park | Feb 25th |
| Merlin | Holyfield Lake | Oct 10th |
| Merlin | Ilford | Jan 31st |
| Merlin | Staines Moor | Aug 29th |
| Merlin | London Wetland Centre | Sep 11th |
| Caspian Gull | London Wetland Centre | Ten dates during the year |
| Caspian Gull | Walthamstow Res | Jan 25th, Feb 1st, Nov 22nd |
| Glaucous Gull | London Wetland Centre | Feb 8th |
| Nightjar | London Wetland Centre | May 21st |
| Hoopoe | KGV Res | Dec 24th |

Just two years after receiving a visit from Britain's first Glaucous-winged Gull Larus glaucescens, the larid hot-spot of Beddington staked another potential claim with this first-winter - or hybrid. (Peter Alfrey)



| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Richard's Pipit | Rainham Marshes | May 30th |
| Richard's Pipit | Wormwood Scrubs | Oct 28th |
| Red-throated Pipit | Rainham Marshes | Oct 13th |
| Yellow-browed Warbler | Rainham Marshes | Oct 11th |
| Yellow-browed Warbler | Wraysbury GP | Nov 7th |
| Golden Oriole | Woodford Green | May 18th |
| Golden Oriole | Beddington Farmlands | June 14th |
| Golden Oriole | Teddington Lock | June 30th |
| Serin | Rainham Marshes | Jan 2nd, Nov 15th-20th, Dec 6th-28th |
| Lapland Bunting | Rainham Marshes | Nov 12th, 16th, Dec 4th, 6th |
| Snow Bunting | Rainham Marshes | Dec 4th, 6th |

Records still in circulation

The following records are still being considered either by the British Birds Rarities Committee or by our Rarities Committee.

2008

| | | |
|---------|-----------|----------|
| Goshawk | Prae Wood | Apr 12th |
|---------|-----------|----------|

2009

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 'Atlantic' Yellow-legged Gull | Rainham Marshes | Nov 7th, Dec 11th |
| Glaucous-winged Gull | Rainham Marshes | Mar 12th, 16th, 18th, 21st |
| Glaucous-winged Gull | Q. Mother Res | Feb 3rd, 8th, Mar 26th, Apr 20th |
| Glaucous-winged Gull | Beddington Farmlands | Apr 21st, 22nd |

APPENDIX IV: CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO PREVIOUS *LBRs*

Unfortunately some data was missing at the time of writing the 2008 *LBR*, particularly from the Royal Parks Wildlife Group. The most important omissions are listed below along with a few corrections from earlier years; limited space prevents listing more records.

Abbreviations used

ADD Additional record(s)

ALT Alteration/correction to record(s)

White-fronted Goose - 2008 ALT

Essex: Chafford Hundred, delete entry for Jan 28th.

Brent Goose - 2007/2008 ADD

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, one on the Round Pond from Nov 20th-30th 2008.
Surrey: QE II Res, one on Dec 10th 2007.

Egyptian Goose - 2008 ALT

In Lond: Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, entry should read: bred, present in every month.

Mandarin Duck - 2007 ALT

Middx: Grovelands Park, 143 on Dec 2nd not 22nd.

Common Pochard - 2008 ADD, breeding

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (1). St James's Park (2).

Tufted Duck - 2008 ADD, breeding

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (1). Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (4). St James's Park (4).

Scaup - 2008 ALT

Surrey: South Norwood Lake, Sep 23rd, location should be South Norwood CP.

Ruddy Duck - 2008 ADD

In Lond: St James's Park (2 pairs bred), ten on Jan 23rd.

Great Northern Diver - 2007 ADD

Surrey: Island Barn Res, three also present on Jan 24th (DMH).

Little Grebe - 2008 ADD/ALT

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn, one all year. Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns, entry should read: probably bred, up to four all year. St James's Park, bred, up to six all year.

Great Crested Grebe - 2008 ALT

In Lond: Hyde Park, entry should read (3), max count of 22 on Nov 20th.

Red-necked Grebe - 2007 ALT

Herts: West Hyde, record for Dec 31st should be deleted.

Great Egret - 2008 ADD

Essex: Rainham Marshes, one on July 2nd (JSm).

White Stork - 2007 ALT

In Lond: Borough, June 10th, times were 18:45 to 18:47, observer should read RHB.

Spoonbill - 2008 ALT

Herts: Amwell GP, date should read May 4th.

Common Buzzard - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, five sightings through the year.

Harrier sp - 2008 ADD

Middx: Stanwell Moor, May 31st (CL)

Osprey - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, one flew NW at 10:00 on Apr 13th.

Merlin - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Regent's Park, one on Dec 25th.

Hobby - 2008 ALT/ADD

Middx: Table should read 'proved breeding: four pairs; total: six pairs'.

In Lond: Also seen in Buckingham Palace Gdn and Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns.

Water Rail - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, on Mar 1st-2nd and on three dates between Dec 7th and 31st.

Woodcock - 2008 ADD

Middx: Horsenden Hill, one on Nov 8th.

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn, one on Mar 27th.

Bar-tailed Godwit - 2008 ADD

Essex: Hackney Marshes, five east over Olympic site on Apr 20th.

In Lond: Hyde Park, one flew low over the Parade Ground on Apr 20th at 08:10 (DTM).

Green Sandpiper - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, one on Apr 18th.

Mediterranean Gull - 2008 ALT

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, present until Mar 19th and again from Nov 9th to the year-end.

Iceland Gull - 2007/2008 ADD

Surrey: Island Barn Res, on Jan 31st and Feb 6th 2007. QE II Res, on Jan 27th, 28th and 30th 2007 (DMH).

Essex: Rainham Marshes, on Mar 5th 2008 (PH) and Dec 21st 2008 (RSPB).

Glaucous Gull - 2007/2008 ADD

Surrey: Island Barn Res, singles on May 1st, Dec 12th and 24th 2007 (DMH).

Essex: Rainham Marshes, on Feb 10th 2008 (MR).

Lesser Black-backed Gull - 2007 ALT

Herts: Hilfield Park Res, record of breeding should be deleted.

Kittiwake - 2008 ADD

Middx: Horsenden Hill, a 1st-winter flew W with Black-headed Gulls on Nov 2nd.

Sandwich Tern - 2008 ADD

Essex: Grays, seven on Sep 24th and six on Sep 26th.

Middx: Horsenden Hill, one flew NE on Sep 7th.

Common Guillemot - 2002 ADD

Kent: Crossness, one on the Thames on Sep 26th.

Little Auk - 2006 ADD / 2007 ALT

Essex: Rainham, Nov 25th 2006 (HV)

Surrey: QE II Res on Nov 15th 2007, observer should read DMH, not DM.

Stock Dove - 2008 ADD, breeding

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (1). Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (3+).

Ring-necked Parakeet - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, three pairs at potential nest holes.

Turtle Dove - 2008 ADD

Middx: Horsenden Hill, one on Sep 10th.

Little Owl - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Hyde Park, one hunting over the meadow on Sep 8th.

Tawny Owl - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, a pair raised four young. St James's Park, one in November.

European Nightjar - 2007 ALT

Herts: Ponsbourne Park, May 29th, record should be deleted.

Kingfisher - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, singles on ten dates between Apr 14th and Nov 28th.

Green Woodpecker - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, bred.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker - 2008 ADD

Middx: Horsenden Hill, a further decline with just two records, on Feb 9th and 18th.

House Martin - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Hyde Park, at least six nests at Albert Gate colony.

Tree Pipit - 2007 ALT

Herts: Beech Farm GP, record of probable breeding should be deleted.

Rock Pipit - 2007 ADD

Surrey: QE II Res, one on Mar 12th.

Yellow Wagtail - 2008 ADD

Essex: Orsett Fen, one pair bred.

Blue-headed Wagtail - 2008 ADD

Kent: Crossness, male on May 13th.

Wren - 2008 ALT/ADD, breeding

Surrey: RSPB Croydon Group survey, should read recorded in 89% of gardens and 87% of local parks.

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (2-3), Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (6+), St James's Park (1).

Black Redstart - 2008 ADD

Middx: One pair bred.

Common Redstart - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, singles on Apr 16th, 20th and 21st.

Whinchat - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Kensington Gdns, singles on Apr 30th and Aug 21st.

European Stonechat - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Hyde Park, one on Mar 15th.

Northern Wheatear - 2008 ADD

In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, one or two on five dates in spring and two in autumn.

Ring Ouzel - 2008 ADD

Middx: Horsenden Hill, one on Nov 1st.
In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, singles on Apr 22nd and 25th.

Blackbird - 2008 ADD, territorial

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (5). Kensington Gdns (17+).

Song Thrush - 2008 ADD, territorial

In Lond: Kensington Gdns (3+).

Mistle Thrush - 2008 ADD, territorial

In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (1). Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (2). St James's Park (1).

- Cetti's Warbler** - 2007 ALT
Herts: Delete records of territories at Maple Lodge NR and Stanstead Abbots.
- Grasshopper Warbler** - 2008 ADD
In Lond: Kensington Gdns, one flushed from Buck Hill on Aug 24th.
- Blackcap** - 2008 ADD, territorial
In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (1). Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (2+). St James's Park (1).
- Yellow-browed Warbler** - 2008 ADD
Essex: Fairlop Waters, on Oct 18th (RW).
- Wood Warbler** - 2008 ADD
Middx: Horsenden Hill, one on Apr 29th.
- Firecrest** - 2008 ADD
Middx: Perivale Wood, singles on Feb 16th and Nov 30th.
In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, 1-2 in Mar, Apr and Oct-Dec.
- Spotted Flycatcher** - 2007 ALT
Herts: Delete territorial records at Brickendonbury and Tyttenhanger GP.
- Long-tailed Tit** - 2008 ADD, territorial
In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (6).
- Coal Tit** - 2008 ADD, breeding
In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (1). St James's Park (1).
- Blue Tit** - 2008 ADD, breeding
In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (3). Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (8+). St James's Park (1+).
- Great Tit** - 2008 ADD, breeding
In Lond: Buckingham Palace Gdn (3). Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (7+), St James's Park (1+).
- Nuthatch** - 2008 ADD, breeding
In Lond: Kensington Gdns (1).
- Treecreeper** - 2008 ADD, breeding
In Lond: Kensington Gdns (1).
- Red-backed Shrike** - 2004 ADD
Kent: Crossness, one male on May 16th.
- Starling** - 2008 ADD
In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, bred; max c600 on Aug 28th.
- Chaffinch** - 2008 ADD, territorial
In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (3+); 155 over on Oct 19th. St James's Park (2).
- Brambling** - 2008 ADD
In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, two on Mar 26th, one on Nov 6th.
- Greenfinch** - 2008 ADD, territorial
In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns (2).
- Siskin** - 2008 ADD
In Lond: Hyde Park & Kensington Gdns, up to 20 from Jan 1st-Mar 18th and four on Dec 15th.
- Lesser Redpoll** - 2008 ADD
In Lond: Hyde Park, eight on Oct 9th.
- Mealy Redpoll** - 2008 ADD
Essex: Chafford Hundred, singles on Oct 13th & Nov 23rd.
- Yellowhammer** - 2008 ADD, territorial
Essex: Bulphan (10).
- Corn Bunting** - 2007 ALT
Herts: Potters Crouch (2), record should be deleted.

FIRST AND LAST DATES OF REGULAR MIGRANTS, 2009

| Summer Migrants: | Arrival | | Departure | |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Garganey | Mar 16 | London Wetland Centre | Oct 31 | King George VI Res |
| Osprey | Apr 1 | Cheshunt/Stoke N. Res | Nov 21 | Chess Valley |
| Hobby | Apr 13 | Beddington Farmlands | Oct 9 | Brent Res |
| Little Ringed Plover | Mar 14 | Four sites | Sep 10 | Q Mother Res |
| Whimbrel | Apr 8 | Q Mother Res | Sep 20 | Staines Res |
| Little Tern | Apr 17 | Beddington Farmlands | Aug 7 | Tyttenhanger GP |
| Black Tern | Apr 18 | Crossness | Sep 16 | Q Mary Res/Stoke N. Res |
| Sandwich Tern | Apr 8 | KGV Res | Sep 24 | Crossness |
| Common Tern | Mar 14 | Thorpe Water Park | Oct 14 | Rainham Marshes |
| Arctic Tern | Apr 10 | East India Dock Basin | Oct 9 | Rainham Marshes |
| Turtle Dove | Apr 25 | Crossness/Rye Meads | Oct 20 | Crossness |
| Cuckoo | Apr 5 | Maple Lodge NR | Sep 27 | Fairlop Waters |
| Common Swift | Apr 18 | Bowyers Water/Q Mother Res | Sep 20 | Horton GP |
| Sand Martin | Mar 5 | Belhus Woods CP | Oct 4 | Arthur Jacob NR |
| Swallow | Mar 18 | Beddington Farmlands | Nov 6 | Chafford Hundred |
| House Martin | Mar 17 | Portsmouth Rd FB | Oct 11 | LWC/Tyttenhanger GP |
| Tree Pipit | Apr 13 | Crossness | Oct 14 | Wimbledon Common |
| Yellow Wagtail | Mar 29 | London Wetland Centre | Oct 29 | Q Mother Res |
| Nightingale | Mar 15 | Hatfield Park | Sep 20 | London Wetland Centre |
| Common Redstart | Apr 6 | Brockley/Crossness | Oct 14 | Crayford Marshes |
| Whinchat | Apr 18 | London Wetland Centre | Oct 18 | Crossness |
| Northern Wheatear | Mar 1 | East India Dock Basin | Oct 26 | Crossness/Rainham Mshs |
| Ring Ouzel | Apr 6 | Beddington/Wetland Centre | Nov 8 | Staines Moor/Wd Scrubs |
| Grasshopper Warbler | Apr 9 | Rainham Marshes | Oct 4 | Wormwood Scrubs |
| Sedge Warbler | Apr 5 | Rainham Marshes | Oct 10 | London Wetland Centre |
| Reed Warbler | Apr 6 | Dagenham Chase | Oct 27 | London Wetland Centre |
| Garden Warbler | Apr 13 | Fishers Green Island | Sep 15 | LWC/Wimbledon Common |
| Lesser Whitethroat | Apr 10 ^w | Staines Moor | Oct 6 | London Wetland Centre |
| Common Whitethroat | Apr 1 | Morden Hall Park | Sep 30 | Wormwood Scrubs |
| Wood Warbler | May 9 | Ridlands | Sep 22 | London Wetland Centre |
| Willow Warbler | Mar 5 | Bush Wood, Wanstead | Oct 4 | Ingrebourne Valley/LWC |
| Spotted Flycatcher | May 10 | Greenwich Park | Sep 29 | London Wetland Centre |
| Pied Flycatcher | May 4 | Ingrebourne Valley | Sep 19 | Vicarage Farm |

^w excludes wintering records

| Winter Migrants: | Departure | | Arrival | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| Smew | Mar 22 | Staines Res | Dec 7 | Amwell NR |
| Goosander | Apr 15 | KGV Res | Oct 14 | Amwell NR |
| Bittern | May 4 | Seventy Acres Lake | Sep 1 | Walthamstow Res |
| Jack Snipe | Apr 20 | Horton GP | Oct 2 | Kempton Park NR |
| Rock Pipit | Apr 4 | Brent Res | Sep 14 | QE II Res |
| Water Pipit | Apr 15 | London Wetland Centre | Oct 8 | Rainham Marshes |
| Fieldfare | Apr 22 | Mudchute Farm | Oct 4 | London Wetland Centre |
| Redwing | Apr 13 | Harold Court/Stoke N. Res | Sep 25 | London Wetland Centre |
| Brambling | Apr 19 | Brookmans Park | Oct 8 | London Wetland Centre |
| Siskin | June 3 | Bedfords Park | Aug 28 | Oxhey |

RINGING REPORT

CHRIS LAMSDELL

A series of poor spring weather conditions was broken in 2009, this being the fifth-warmest spring since the Met Office started maintaining records in 1914; spring rainfall was below normal over most of the UK, especially in Eastern and Southern England where in some areas it was less than 70% of the average.

As a consequence, breeding success was higher, and the reported ringing total for the LNHS Area for 2009 was 24,498 - a 26% increase compared to the 19,437 birds ringed in 2008. This total was made up of 21,321 full-grown birds, up 29% (2008: 16,494) and 3,177 nestlings, up 8% (2008: 2,943). The total numbers of some species ringed can vary due to ringer coverage or due to weather conditions making catching either favourable or not. For these reasons, some changes in species figures are not always a reflection on their population levels but sometimes of ringer activity. A good reflection of population levels is through Constant Effort Sites (CES), which can be found on the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) website: www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/surveys/ces

The BTO now provides online data for ringing in UK, set out on a County basis which, for the LNHS Area, unfortunately, is not a true reflection of ringing activities within this Area; it does, however, provide precise details of birds ringed in the Greater London area and surrounding counties, which can be found at:

www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports

The relative positions of the most-ringed species are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The ten most-ringed species, in descending order

| Species | Full-grown | Pullus | Total |
|-------------------|------------|--------|-------|
| Blue Tit | 2,309 | 1,098 | 3,407 |
| Great Tit | 1,285 | 1,093 | 2,378 |
| Blackcap | 2,218 | 5 | 2,223 |
| Common Chiffchaff | 1,588 | 16 | 1,604 |
| Greenfinch | 1,395 | 5 | 1,400 |
| Reed Warbler | 925 | 76 | 1,001 |
| Robin | 876 | 17 | 893 |
| Goldfinch | 794 | - | 794 |
| Long-tailed Tit | 768 | 2 | 770 |
| Dunnock | 739 | 4 | 743 |

The top four species ringed remained the same as in 2008; Blackbird dropped out of the top ten this year and Goldfinch came in. The top four also increased, with Blue Tit up by 59%, Great Tit up by 34%, Blackcap up by 53% and Common Chiffchaff up by 24%. Greenfinch moved up from 6th to 5th position with an increase of 66%, swapping places with Reed Warbler which decreased slightly from 1,021 birds to 1,001. Robin moved up to 7th from 8th with an increase of 19%, and Goldfinch came in at 8th place with an increase of 91%. Long-tailed Tit dropped down to 9th place from 7th with 770 ringed

compared to 757 in 2008, only a small increase, and in 10th place was Dunnock, down from 9th despite a 12% increase in birds ringed, and displacing Blackbird despite its 14% increase.

Mute Swan numbers were up by 477% due to some additional effort in ringing them in the Hertfordshire area. Goose numbers fluctuated, showing significant increases: Canada and Egyptian were up by 190% and 87% respectively; the exception was Greylag which decreased by 61%. Generally the number of ducks ringed increased: Mandarin up 133%, Common Teal up 93%, Mallard up 37%, Common Pochard up 350% and Tufted Duck up 271%; the exception was Gadwall, with only 1 pullus ringed and less adults - a decrease of 80%. Eight Little Grebes were ringed, up from one in 2008, and for the second year running, Cormorant pulli (six) were ringed in the LNHS Area in the Lea Valley. Six adult Grey Herons (2008: four) were ringed but 12 less pulli (2008: 28), resulting in an overall decrease of 31%.

The number of Sparrowhawks ringed dropped slightly, down to 23 adults from 25 and with no pulli. Kestrel numbers dropped by 72%, with only five pulli ringed (2008: 22). No Hobby were ringed.

Four Water Rails were ringed (down one), but Moorhen and Coot numbers continued to increase by 61% and 31% respectively.

Waders ringed within the LNHS Area fluctuate in number year on year, but 2009 was again a low year for them with generally further decreases: no Ringed Plover, Little Ringed Plover or Redshank, and decreases in the number of Northern Lapwing, Jack Snipe and Green Sandpiper. Increases were: two Common Sandpipers (2008: nil), Dunlin up 92%, and Common Snipe up 500%.

The overall number of gull species ringed dropped, potentially due to slightly less gull catches at Rainham and a focus on Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Black-headed Gulls decreased by 73%, Common Gulls by 100% (2008: five) and Herring Gulls by 17%, whereas Lesser Black-backed Gulls increased by 733%, and a single Yellow-legged Gull was ringed. Common Tern shows a significant decrease from 120 pulli in 2008 down to 44 in total (43 pulli) in 2009.

Numbers of Woodpigeon and Collared Dove increased 71% and 45% respectively but Stock Dove decreased by 24%. Ring-necked Parakeet continued to increase, but the number ringed was slightly down (124 compared to 146); again, most of the data came from the Surrey area within the LNHS Recording Area.

Five Cuckoos were ringed, three adults and two pulli (2008: one of each). Six Barn Owl pulli (up one) and one adult (2008: nil) were ringed, but no Tawny Owls at all (2008: six).

After last year's 41 Common Swifts, this year was 'back to normal' with none ringed - the previous ones being ringed in 2002.

Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker were up by 38% and 4% respectively, and a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was ringed - the first since 2006 (also a single).

Sand Martin and Swallow numbers were higher, 30% and 40% respectively, but House Martin - a species that can be affected by ringer activity or weather conditions - decreased significantly by 93%.

The average ringing total for Meadow Pipit was around 50 birds, but over the past three years catches have been higher than this, and this year continued with 170, a 37% increase on 2008; no Water Pipits were ringed. Two Yellow Wagtails were ringed (2008: nil), but

there was a decrease in the number of Grey Wagtails (24%) and Pied Wagtails (55%).

Two Common Redstarts were ringed (2008: one). European Stonechats were down 50% (from four to two), and Northern Wheatear remained unchanged at one.

Most thrushes showed an increase: Blackbird 15%, Fieldfare 63%, Song Thrush 26%, and Redwing also 63%; but Mistle Thrush decreased by 75%.

Cetti's Warblers in our Area followed the National average, and the number ringed increased by 175%. All but one of the commonly-ringed summer warbler migrants were higher, continuing the reversal of the downward trends of previous years: Sedge Warbler slightly up, by 5%; Blackcap up 53%; Garden Warbler up 14%; Lesser Whitethroat up 65%; Common Whitethroat up 90%; Common Chiffchaff up 24%; and Willow Warbler up 21%. Only Reed Warbler decreased (a total of 20 less, down 2%). Grasshopper Warbler was up 60% at eight (2008: five).

Goldcrest numbers, which normally increase in winter, dropped back from last year's significant increase of 268% to a decrease of 81%. Only one Firecrest was ringed (2008: five).

No Spotted Flycatchers were ringed (2008: three), an indication of their increasing scarcity.

Both Blue and Great Tit numbers picked up on the last two years' decreases and rose by 59% and 34% respectively. Long-tailed Tit continued to increase (only slightly), but Coal Tit fell by 14%. Surprisingly, eight Marsh Tit pulli were ringed, but no adults and again no Willow Tits. Nuthatch and Treecreeper both increased, by 67% and 54% respectively.

The number of House Sparrows, from last year's high of 483, dropped back by 69% to 148; this was partly due to less intensive work on the City House Sparrows project, which still ringed the vast majority of this year's birds. Sadly, the decline in the number of Tree Sparrows ringed continued last year's downward trend by a further 13%.

Finch numbers ringed were mostly higher, with increases in Chaffinch (57%), Greenfinch (66%), Goldfinch (91%), Linnet (88%) and Lesser Redpoll (831%). Siskin remained about the same, but Brambling and Bullfinch fell by 44% and 11% respectively.

The number of Yellowhammers ringed increased by 720% to 41, and Reed Buntings by 85% to 257.

Pulli The overall number ringed was 8% higher. The increase in the number of Blue and Great Tit fledglings ringed continued, with 28% and 35% respectively. The other major nest-box species, Tree Sparrow, after last year's dramatic decrease of 61%, decreased by a further 12%.

The number of open-nest pulli of Sedge and Reed Warbler ringed, reversed their upward trend by falling 57% and 43% respectively, and the number of Common Tern pulli decreased again by 64% (2008: 18%), from 120 to 43.

Unusual species These included one scarce migrant, a Wryneck, following on the bird ringed in 2008. Other records of note were: Jack Snipe (1); Nightingale (2), Common Redstart (1); Tree Pipit (1); Northern Wheatear (1); Firecrest (1); Pied Flycatcher (1) and Mealy Redpoll (1).

There have been a number of interesting recoveries reported during the year; a selection of these is listed below. (*Sites within the London Area are attributed to their Watsonian*

vice-county, as used in the rest of the London Bird Report, with the present administrative area in parentheses. This is to prevent confusion since many counties, where the original ringing, recovery or control may have taken place, use current administrative boundaries).

The first detail line shows the ring number, the age (and sex) when ringed, and the date and site of original ringing; the second line the status, date and site of subsequent recovery or recapture; followed by the distance (1km=0.625 miles) and number of days between original ringing and final recovery; and finally any observations or comments. Dates are in the format dd/mm/yyyy.

Key to symbols used:

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| ad Adult | M Male | VV Ring or colour marks read |
| F Female | pul Pullus/Nestling | in the field |
| juv Juvenile | R Caught and released | X Found dead |
| | by a ringer | + Shot or killed by man |

Numerals:

EURING Codes for the age of the bird when ringed, as mentioned by the person who handled the bird.

The following is based on information provided in the *EURING Exchange Code Manual 2000+*.

- 3 1st-year: full-grown bird hatched in the breeding season of this calendar year.
 4 After 1st-year: full-grown bird hatched before this calendar year; year of birth otherwise unknown.
 5 2nd year: a bird hatched in the previous calendar year and now in its second calendar year.
 6 After 2nd year: full-grown bird hatched before last calendar year; year of birth otherwise unknown.

Gadwall *Anas streperus*

| | | | |
|---------|------|------------|--|
| FP98426 | ad M | 17/01/2009 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | + | 14/12/2009 | Téteghem, Nord, France 187km; 337 days |
| FP98447 | juv | 26/07/2008 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | X | 26/01/2009 | Higham, Suffolk 66km; 160 days |

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

| | | | |
|---------|------|------------|--|
| EW15041 | ad M | 15/03/2008 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | + | 20/08/2009 | Uusimaa, Finland 1,856km; 523 days |

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

| | | | |
|---------|------|------------|---|
| GC40469 | ad M | 26/07/2008 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | + | 17/01/2009 | Killerton, Broadclyst, Devon 266km; 175 days |

Common Pochard *Aythya farina*

| | | | |
|----------|------|------------|---|
| DA262687 | ad M | 27/10/2006 | Saint-Philbert-De-Grand-Lieu, France |
| | VV | 26/05/2009 | Hilfield Park Res, Herts 525km; 942 days |

This bird was identified through a blue nasal saddle A4D. Other *Aythya* ducks are being seen in the London Area bearing nasal saddles.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|---|
| FP66443 | pul | 31/07/2005 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | + | 15/09/2007 | Militseyskaya, Priuralskiy, Yamal-Nenets, Russia 4,159km; 776 days |
| FP66456 | pul | 27/08/2005 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | + | 06/09/2008 | Námaskarð, Mývatnssveit (Lake Mývatn), Surdur-Thingeyjar, Iceland 1,814km; 1,106 days |

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

21 sightings of this colour-marked Cormorant have been reported; a summary is shown below:

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|---|
| 5230299 | pul | 29/06/2006 | Forvie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland |
| | VV | 19/08/2007 | Forvie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland |
| | VV | 13/04/2008 | Forvie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland |
| | VV | 11/10/2008 | Aberdeen Harbour, Aberdeenshire, Scotland |
| | VV | 28/03/2009 | Island Barn Res, Surrey |
| | VV | 08/04/2009 | Island Barn Res, Surrey |
| | VV | 12/07/2009 | Forvie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland |
| | VV | 12/09/2009 | Aberdeen Harbour, Aberdeenshire, Scotland |
| | VV | 17/10/2009 | Aberdeen Harbour, Aberdeenshire, Scotland |

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

| | | | |
|---------|-------|------------|--|
| EL27541 | juv F | 07/11/2006 | Heston, Middx |
| | | 09/06/2009 | Cooksbridge, Lewis, Sussex 70km; 945 days |

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

| | | | |
|---------|---|------------|---|
| 3455405 | 3 | 25/09/1997 | Skanörs Revlar, Malmöhus, Sweden |
| SVS | R | 11/02/2006 | Crossness LNR, Kent |
| | R | 24/12/2008 | Crossness LNR, Kent 945km, WSW; 4,108 days |
| OA89621 | 3 | 11/09/2000 | Langenwerder, Mecklenburg, Germany |
| DEH | R | 26/02/2003 | Crossness LNR, Kent |
| | R | 21/02/2009 | Crossness LNR, Kent 813km, WSW; 3,085 days |
| NT86043 | 5 | 29/02/2004 | Crossness LNR, Kent |
| | R | 22/07/2009 | Skanör, Malmöhus, Malmö, Sweden 948km, ENE; 1,970 days |

Gulls

With increased ringing of gulls, including colour-ringing of the larger gulls at Rainham by the North Thames Gull Group (NTGG), the number of reports has increased significantly and to report them all here would take too much space. Recoveries of the colour-ringed gulls by the NTGG can be seen at their website www.ntgg.org.uk

The following is a breakdown of gulls ringed in the London Area during 2009 which were re-sighted overseas: Black-headed Gull - Germany, Sweden; Lesser Black-backed Gull - Belgium, France (5), Guernsey, Morocco, Netherlands (7), Norway, Portugal (3), Spain (25); Herring Gull - France (6), Netherlands.

Foreign-ringed gulls recovered or sighted during 2009 had the following origins: Black-headed Gull - Finland, Norway, Sweden (2); Lesser Black-backed Gull - Germany; Herring Gull - Netherlands. A selection of recoveries from these projects follows:

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

| | | | |
|----------|----|------------|---|
| 6174124 | ad | 26/03/2000 | Frognerparken, Akershus, Norway |
| | VV | 16/11/2000 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 07/03/2008 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 08/11/2008 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 08/03/2009 | Alexandra Park, Middx 1,146km; 3,269 days |
| 6191267 | ad | 08/03/2000 | Pildammsparken, Malmöhus, Malmö, Sweden |
| | VV | 22/01/2008 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 06/03/2008 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 04/10/2008 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 08/03/2009 | Alexandra Park, Middx 972km; 3,285 days |
| 6199157 | ad | 22/03/2001 | Pildammsparken, Malmöhus, Malmö, Sweden |
| | VV | 22/01/2008 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 06/03/2008 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 31/10/2008 | Alexandra Park, Middx |
| | VV | 13/02/2009 | Alexandra Park, Middx 972km; 2,885 days |
| ST229845 | ad | 19/04/2003 | Turku-Pori, Finland |
| | VV | 02/01/2008 | St James's Park, In Lond |
| | VV | 24/12/2008 | St James's Park, In Lond |
| | VV | 03/02/2009 | St James's Park, In Lond 1,712km; 2,076 days |
| EH56982 | ad | 13/11/1980 | Regent's Park, In Lond. |
| | VV | 07/11/2007 | Regent's Park, In Lond |
| | VV | 05/03/2008 | Regent's Park, In Lond |
| | VV | 04/02/2009 | Regent's Park, In Lond |
| | VV | 04/03/2009 | Regent's Park, In Lond |
| | VV | 02/12/2009 | Regent's Park, In Lond 2km; 10,611 days |

| | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--|
| ET34501 | ad | 21/10/1998 | St James's Park, In Lond |
| | R | 24/06/2008 | Svandammen, Stockholm, Sweden 1,409km; 3,534 days |

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|
| N0079 | pul | 05/07/2008 | Amrum, Nordfriesische Inseln, Germany |
| | 5 | 12/09/2009 | Rainham Tip, Essex 646km; 434 days |
| FR59712 | juv | 29/08/2009 | Rainham Tip, Essex |
| | VV | 23/12/2009 | Plage Blanche, Tan Tan, Morocco 2,653km; 116 days |

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

| | | | |
|-------|-----|------------|---------------------------------------|
| 61420 | pul | 28/06/2006 | Moerdijk, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands |
| | VV | 14/03/2009 | Rainham Tip, Essex 305km; 990 days |

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|------------------------------------|
| FC87381 | juv | 07/06/2005 | Lemsford Springs NR, Herts |
| | X F | 31/01/2009 | Lemsford, Herts 1km; 1,334 days |

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|---|
| GF65475 | pul | 30/06/2009 | Beech Farm, Hatfield, Herts |
| | X F | 01/11/2009 | Amesbury (A303), Wiltshire 126km; 142 days |
| GF65476 | pul | 30/06/2009 | Beech Farm, Hatfield, Herts |
| | X F | 19/11/2009 | Amesbury (A303), Wiltshire 126km; 142 days |

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|---|
| DC0217 | ad | 21/05/2005 | Peñón De Zapata, Alhaurin de la Torre, Malaga, Spain |
| | R | 31/01/2009 | Rye Meads, Herts 1,718km; 935 days |
| V567210 | juv | 07/08/2009 | Seaside Dyke, Errol, Tayside |
| | R | 20/08/2009 | Stanwell Moor GP, Middx 515km; 13 days |
| V887086 | juv | 12/07/2008 | Rye Meads, Hertfs |
| | R | 09/08/2009 | Estany d'Ivars, Ivars d'Urgell, Lleida, Spain 1,123km; 28 days |

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|
| V081494 | juv | 20/05/2007 | Hilfield Park Res, Herts |
| | 6 | 29/02/2009 | Minet CP, Hayes, Middx 18km; 620 days |

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

| | | | |
|---------|------|------------|---|
| RR14259 | ad F | 22/01/2008 | Stanborough Reedbed, Herts |
| | X | 29/05/2009 | Alvesta, Kronoberg, Sweden 1,120km; 493 days |

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|---|
| V530108 | juv | 25/08/2007 | nr Marsworth, Tring, Herts |
| | R | 20/10/2007 | Wilstone Res, Tring, Herts |
| | R | 29/11/2008 | Rye Meads, Herts 46km; 462 days |
| X268672 | 4F | 13/04/2009 | Crossness LNR, Kent |
| | R | 20/04/2009 | Higham Marshes, Medway 23km, ESE; 7 days |

Given the species involved, X268672 is a rather interesting inter-site movement.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|
| V887003 | juv | 12/08/2008 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | R | 06/08/2008 | Etang de Kergalan, Plovan, Finistère, France 531km; 25 days |
| V887526 | juv | 08/08/2008 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | R | 11/08/2008 | Marais D'Arry, Somme, France 207km; 3 days |

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|
| N355514 | juv | 17/07/1999 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | R | 31/07/1999 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | R | 19/07/2000 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | R | 07/08/2005 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | R | 16/08/2009 | Rye Meads, Herts 0km; 3,683 days |
| N826485 | juv | 31/07/2004 | St Margarets at Cliffe, Kent |
| | R | 20/06/2009 | Bedfont Lakes CP, Middx 132km; 1,785 days |
| R105257 | juv | 19/08/2003 | Rye Meads, Herts |
| | R | 16/05/2009 | Lea Bridge, Middx 25km; 2,097 days |
| T445469 | juv | 05/09/2006 | Icklesham, East Sussex |
| | R | 13/06/2009 | Stanwell Moor GP, Middx 104km; 1,012 days |
| T692905 | juv | 07/09/2005 | Beddington SF, Surrey |
| | R | 24/05/2009 | Bedfont Lakes CP, Middx 23km; 1,355 days |
| V405799 | ad | 15/05/2007 | Higham Marshes, Kent |
| | R | 26/04/2009 | Beddington SF, Surrey 44km; 712 days |

| | | | |
|---------|----|------------|--|
| X268505 | 3J | 03/08/2008 | Crossness LNR, Kent |
| | R | 22/08/2008 | Assenede, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium 253km; E; 19 days |

This is our first recovery of this species in Belgium.

| | | | |
|---------|----|------------|---|
| X516650 | ad | 17/06/2009 | Higham Marshes, Kent |
| | R | 20/06/2009 | Bedfont Lakes CP, Middx 65km; 3 days |

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

| | | | |
|---------|-----|------------|--|
| X739950 | juv | 30/08/2009 | Icklesham, East Sussex |
| | R | 24/11/2009 | Bedfont Lakes CP, Middx 99km; 14 days |

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

| | | | |
|--------|-----|------------|--|
| 9Y3881 | juv | 22/05/2008 | Southampton Common, Hampshire |
| | R | 08/09/2009 | Wraysbury GP, Bucks 85km; 474 days |
| AM6581 | juv | 27/09/2009 | Cokaifagne, Liège, Belgium |
| | R | 20/09/2009 | Stanwell Moor GP, Middx 467km; 84 days |
| AND739 | juv | 08/07/2009 | Trowbridge SW, Wiltshire |
| | R | 20/09/2009 | Beddington SF, Surrey 145km; 74 days |
| CAK667 | 3 | 01/09/2007 | Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve, Kent |
| | R | 26/10/2008 | Navalvillar de Pela, Badajoz, Spain 1,424km, SSW; 421 days |
| CNB256 | juv | 29/08/2009 | Wraysbury GP, Bucks |
| | R | 06/09/2009 | Thatcham Marsh, Berkshire 50km; 8 days |
| CYR610 | juv | 19/09/2009 | The Wilderness, Kintbury, Berkshire |
| | R | 22/09/2009 | Wraysbury GP, Bucks 62km; 3 days |
| DBK113 | juv | 13/06/2009 | Icklesham, Sussex |
| | R | 23/08/2009 | Beddington SF, Surrey 79km; 71 days |

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

| | | | |
|---------|------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| CE39963 | juv | 10/10/2006 | Fyren, Falsterbo, Sweden |
| | R | 28/02/2008 | Iver Heath, Bucks 981km; 519 days |
| V843236 | ad M | 05/05/2008 | Kinloch, Highland, Scotland |
| | R | 28/02/2009 | Iver Heath, Bucks 713km; 299 days |

Reporting a ringed bird

The BTO relies on people reporting ringed birds, so if you find a bird wearing a ring or have read metal- or colour-ring details in the field, please report these to the BTO Ringing Unit, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU or use the on-line reporting pages at www.euring.org

Table 2. Species totals of birds reported as ringed in the London Area during 2009

| Species | Full-grown | Pullus | Total | Species | Full-grown | Pullus | Total |
|-----------------------|------------|--------|-------|------------------------|------------|--------|-------|
| Mute Swan | 380 | 47 | 427 | Kingfisher | 64 | - | 64 |
| Greylag Goose | 43 | 11 | 54 | Wryneck | 1 | - | 1 |
| Canada Goose | 434 | 83 | 517 | Green Woodpecker | 40 | - | 40 |
| Egyptian Goose | 32 | 13 | 45 | Gt Spotted Woodpecker | 74 | - | 74 |
| Mandarin | 3 | 4 | 7 | Lsr Spotted Woodpecker | 1 | - | 1 |
| Gadwall | 7 | 1 | 8 | Sand Martin | 35 | - | 35 |
| Common Teal | 29 | - | 29 | Swallow | 65 | 22 | 87 |
| Mallard | 81 | 12 | 93 | House Martin | 18 | - | 18 |
| Shoveler | 1 | - | 1 | Tree Pipit | 1 | - | 1 |
| Common Pochard | 3 | 6 | 9 | Meadow Pipit | 170 | - | 170 |
| Tufted Duck | 27 | 25 | 52 | Yellow Wagtail | 2 | - | 2 |
| Little Grebe | 8 | - | 8 | Grey Wagtail | 21 | 10 | 31 |
| Cormorant | - | 6 | 6 | Pied Wagtail | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Grey Heron | 6 | 16 | 22 | Wren | 538 | 10 | 548 |
| Sparrowhawk | 23 | - | 23 | Dunnock | 739 | 4 | 743 |
| Kestrel | 3 | 5 | 8 | Robin | 876 | 17 | 893 |
| Water Rail | 4 | - | 4 | Nightingale | 2 | - | 2 |
| Moorhen | 40 | 13 | 53 | Common Redstart | 2 | - | 2 |
| Coot | 76 | 13 | 89 | European Stonechat | 2 | - | 2 |
| Northern Lapwing | - | 1 | 1 | Northern Wheatear | 1 | - | 1 |
| Dunlin | 25 | - | 25 | Blackbird | 671 | 8 | 679 |
| Jack Snipe | 1 | - | 1 | Fieldfare | 13 | - | 13 |
| Common Snipe | 12 | - | 12 | Song Thrush | 321 | 4 | 325 |
| Common Sandpiper | 2 | - | 2 | Redwing | 57 | - | 57 |
| Green Sandpiper | 2 | - | 2 | Mistle Thrush | 1 | - | 1 |
| Black-headed Gull | 50 | 40 | 90 | Cetti's Warbler | 31 | 2 | 33 |
| Lsr Black-backed Gull | 125 | - | 125 | Grasshopper Warbler | 8 | - | 8 |
| Herring Gull | 66 | 1 | 67 | Sedge Warbler | 511 | 39 | 550 |
| Yellow-legged Gull | 1 | - | 1 | Reed Warbler | 925 | 76 | 1,001 |
| Common Tern | 1 | 43 | 44 | Blackcap | 2,218 | 5 | 2,223 |
| Stock Dove | - | 13 | 13 | Garden Warbler | 243 | 5 | 248 |
| Woodpigeon | 79 | 3 | 82 | Lesser Whitethroat | 160 | - | 160 |
| Collared Dove | 13 | 3 | 16 | Common Whitethroat | 998 | 2 | 1,000 |
| Ring-necked Parakeet | 124 | - | 124 | Common Chiffchaff | 1,588 | 16 | 1,604 |
| Cuckoo | 3 | 2 | 5 | Willow Warbler | 249 | - | 249 |
| Barn Owl | 1 | 6 | 7 | Goldcrest | 95 | - | 95 |
| Little Owl | 3 | - | 3 | Firecrest | 1 | - | 1 |

| Species | Full-grown | Pullus | Total | Species | Full-grown | Pullus | Total |
|-----------------|------------|--------|-------|----------------|------------|--------|--------|
| Pied Flycatcher | 1 | - | 1 | Tree Sparrow | - | 345 | 345 |
| Long-tailed Tit | 768 | 2 | 770 | Chaffinch | 738 | 2 | 740 |
| Blue Tit | 2,309 | 1,098 | 3,407 | Brambling | 5 | - | 5 |
| Great Tit | 1,285 | 1,093 | 2,378 | Greenfinch | 1,395 | 5 | 1,400 |
| Coal Tit | 52 | 7 | 59 | Goldfinch | 794 | - | 794 |
| Marsh Tit | 0 | 8 | 8 | Siskin | 373 | - | 373 |
| Nuthatch | 10 | - | 10 | Linnet | 47 | - | 47 |
| Treecreeper | 40 | - | 40 | Lesser Redpoll | 205 | - | 205 |
| Jay | 63 | - | 63 | Mealy Redpoll | 1 | - | 1 |
| Magpie | 30 | 5 | 35 | Bullfinch | 68 | - | 68 |
| Jackdaw | 20 | 6 | 26 | Yellowhammer | 41 | - | 41 |
| Starling | 225 | 11 | 236 | Reed Bunting | 251 | 6 | 257 |
| House Sparrow | 148 | - | 148 | | | | |
| | | | | | 21,321 | 3,177 | 24,498 |

List of contributors

The compiler gratefully acknowledges the valuable information received from the following: D. Baggott, A.G. Beasley, P. Belman, P. Black, S. Christmas, D. Coleman, M. Cook, Dartford Ringing Group, C.W. Dee, P. Delaloye, J. Gent, A. Gibson, B. Haines, D. Harris, Hersham Ringing Group, C. & D.K. Lamsdell, Maple Cross Ringing Group, M. Netherwood, North Thames Gull Group, M. Reed, P. Roper, D. Ross, Runnymede Ringing Group, Rye Meads Ringing Group, R.F. Sanderson, R. Taylor, B. Trevis.

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Footnote

Historic ringing figures for London for the years 1975-1981, by the London Ringing Centre, can be downloaded from

http://www.euring.org/data_and_codes/historic_ringing_totals.html

The tables include the total number of each species ringed and found in London from 1909.

Ed.

THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN LONDON

IAN WOODWARD, BTO NORTH LONDON CONTACT

The BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) was introduced in 1994 to provide a measure of the population changes of our common and widespread birds. One-kilometre squares are chosen at random by BBS organisers at the BTO. Each square is allocated to a volunteer, who makes two early-morning transect walks between April and June, separated by at least four weeks. The survey is repeated each year, following the same route. By comparing counts of birds made on the same squares in successive years, it is possible to measure population changes.

Where species are sufficiently widespread, changes in population can be measured at regional level as well as at national level. This report covers the London government office region, and therefore does not represent the entire LNHS Area.

In 2009, a total of 110 squares were surveyed in the London region, the second highest number of squares since the start of the survey (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number of squares covered over the most-recent ten years

| 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 59 | 53 | 58 | 61 | 89 | 91 | 104 | 118 | 104 | 110 |

In 2009, two species were seen for the first time on BBS walks in London - Firecrest and Peregrine Falcon. This brings the total seen on London squares to 130 species. Other species seen this year included Tree Pipit, Little Egret and three Tawny Owls. The most abundant species counted was Feral Pigeon (3,197 individuals), followed closely by Starling (3,188).

Table 2 shows the population changes in London between 2008/2009 and 1995/2008, compared with the change found nationally over these periods. The criterion for inclusion in the table is that a species occurs in an average of 30 squares per year over the survey period 1994 to 2009, which is considered to be the minimum number to provide reliable trends. As a result of the low number of squares covered in the early years of the survey, we can report on only 23 species.

Fourteen species show a statistically significant increase in London between 1995 and 2008, including Great Spotted Woodpecker, which is included in the report for the first time this year. Seven species show a significant decrease in London over the same period: Feral Pigeon; Common Swift; Blackbird; Song Thrush; Mistle Thrush; Starling; and House Sparrow.

Population changes between 2008 and 2009 showed a decline for most species, possibly linked to the cold winter in 2008/09. This decline was statistically significant for three species: Song Thrush; Greenfinch; and Chaffinch. However, a notable exception was Blackcap, which showed a statistically significant increase between the two years of +26%.

Table 2. Population changes in numbers of birds in the BTO's London region compared with the United Kingdom

lcl=lower confidence limit; ucl=upper confidence limit

figures in **bold type** are statistically significant

The long term trend has been smoothed. As smoothing involves truncation of the end points, this trend is labelled as 1995/2008, even though the survey period covered is from 1994 to 2009.

| | Sample size London | Change 2008/ 2009 London | Change 2008/ 2009 UK | Change 1995/ 2008 London | Change 1995/ 2008 London lcl | Change 1995/ 2008 London ucl | Change 1995/ 2008 UK |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Mallard | 37 | 2 | -2 | -24 | -48 | 16 | 18 |
| Feral Pigeon ¹ | 64 | 1 | 14 | -22 | -36 | -2 | -8 |
| Woodpigeon | 72 | -7 | -7 | 72 | 33 | 114 | 35 |
| Collared Dove | 47 | 5 | 0 | 57 | 15 | 119 | 26 |
| Common Swift | 55 | 18 | 8 | -21 | -47 | 19 | -29 |
| Gt Sp Woodpecker | 31 | -4 | -2 | 114 | 61 | 161 | 129 |
| Wren | 65 | -5 | -14 | 48 | 24 | 77 | 23 |
| Dunnock | 53 | -5 | 2 | 25 | 1 | 65 | 21 |
| Robin | 68 | -4 | -2 | 81 | 47 | 126 | 23 |
| Blackbird | 72 | -3 | -5 | -16 | -26 | -4 | 26 |
| Song Thrush | 45 | -22 | -2 | -31 | -51 | -11 | 27 |
| Mistle Thrush | 31 | -6 | -12 | -42 | -62 | -15 | -13 |
| Blackcap | 36 | 26 | 10 | 87 | 44 | 166 | 61 |
| Blue Tit | 70 | -9 | -4 | 41 | 20 | 70 | 1 |
| Great Tit | 65 | 3 | -5 | 120 | 73 | 183 | 43 |
| Jay | 35 | -10 | -5 | 12 | -18 | 53 | 13 |
| Magpie | 70 | -5 | -3 | 24 | 3 | 49 | -3 |
| Carrion Crow | 71 | 3 | -2 | 54 | 23 | 98 | 10 |
| Starling | 71 | -3 | -22 | -37 | -52 | -21 | -38 |
| House Sparrow | 63 | -3 | 3 | -68 | -77 | -52 | -9 |
| Chaffinch | 46 | -14 | 3 | 167 | 92 | 320 | 9 |
| Greenfinch | 55 | -19 | -13 | 112 | 56 | 209 | 12 |
| Goldfinch | 35 | -12 | 10 | 182 | 70 | 355 | 56 |

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THE BIRDS OF LARKS WOOD - CHANGES BETWEEN THE 1980s AND THE 2000s

IAN WOODWARD

Introduction

Larks Wood is a 19-hectare wood in Chingford, north-east London (Grid reference TQ383926). It was originally linked to Epping Forest, but was separated from it at least 350 years ago and is now surrounded by houses.

The wood lies largely on the London Clay, but this is capped by a small area of Woodford Gravel at its highest point in the middle of its eastern edge. It is composed predominantly of Pedunculate Oak and Hornbeam, but also a wide variety of other deciduous trees and shrubs including the Wild Service Tree, of which the wood has a notable number (Burton 1983). Evergreen trees and shrubs are limited to Holly, a small number of Yew saplings, and a scattering of the non-native Cherry Laurel. The ground layer is limited due to heavy recreational pressure, particularly from dog-walkers. Bramble is locally abundant, and there is also a good display of bluebells in spring in some areas of the wood, unfortunately including both the native species and hybrid bluebells. In summary, therefore, apart from the Wild Service Tree, the wood is unremarkable in a London context, and there are likely to be many similar such woodlands isolated within its urban areas.

Several other wooded areas remain in the vicinity of Larks Wood. Ainslie Wood (c.150 metres south-west) is a 2-hectare remnant of the same ancient woodland. Highams Park Lake (700 metres east) is the closest part of Epping Forest to the site and is an 11-hectare site also with similar tree species to Larks Wood. Chingford Mount Cemetery (400 metres north-west) is more open, and the tree cover is made up mainly of non-native species that are not found in Larks Wood, eg horse chestnuts, planes and pine trees.

I have been birding in Larks Wood since the early 1980s. The site I cover comprises the wood itself and an adjacent playing field to the north-west, neither of which has changed significantly over the last 30 years. In the 1980s, the site also included a small area of scrubland which has since been turned into housing in what is now Bailey Close. However, this lost habitat has been replaced by a larger area of scrub, formerly an open air swimming pool. Larkswood Leisure Centre has since been built on part of the grounds, but the hill to the south of the leisure centre and adjacent to the wood has been left unmanaged in recent years.

Despite the limited visible changes to the woodland itself, there have been a number of obvious changes to bird species in Larks Wood since the 1980s. Kestrel, Swallow, House Martin, Spotted Flycatcher, Nuthatch and Bullfinch have all disappeared as breeding species from the wood or the immediate surrounding area. Sparrowhawk and Jackdaw have moved into the area, with Ring-necked Parakeet also being seen recently (2009) for the first time.

The current (as at 31/12/2009) bird list for Larks Wood stands at 69 (see Appendix). Excluding flyovers, the total is 56.

Analysis

In order to compare changes in occurrence for the breeding season in Larks Wood, I have looked at data from visits carried out in the 1980s and in the 2000s (Table 1). The data incorporate all visits carried out between March and July inclusive. Purely by coincidence, 72 visits are included in both periods. Visits did not follow a fixed route through the wood. The visit duration ranges from 20 to 140 minutes in the 1980s (with a median visit length of 55 minutes), and from 20 to 90 minutes in the 2000s (median 50 minutes). So, the effort was reasonably similar in the two periods. A complete species list was made for each visit. Counts were made for some species and are referred to in the discussion, but they have not been used in the analysis as I believe they may be unreliable for some of the earlier visits.

Table 1: Summary of visits included in analysis

| 1980s | | 2000s | |
|-------|------------------|-------|------------------|
| Year | Number of visits | Year | Number of visits |
| 1986 | 34 | 2002 | 31 |
| 1987 | 23 | 2004 | 15 |
| 1988 | 14 | 2007 | 5 |
| 1989 | 1 | 2008 | 15 |
| | | 2009 | 6 |
| Total | 72 | Total | 72 |

I have compared the percentage of visits on which each species was recorded in the 1980s with the same measure during the latter period (Table 2). The raw data were tested with Chi-squared to identify which trends were statistically significant. [*The Chi-squared test is a statistical assessment of variance in a population. Ed.*]

Table 2: Occurrence of species in Larks Wood

Differences that were statistically significant ($P < 0.05$) in Chi-squared tests are indicated in *italics* and those that were highly significant ($P < 0.01$) in bold. The data from Larks Wood can be compared with the national trend for the same period. These are based on readings made from British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) national trend graphs (www.bto.org/about-birds/bird-trends).

[*'P'* is a measure of the probability of error: the lower the value of *P*, the greater the probability that the result is not a 'fluke' and is therefore significant. Ed.]

National Trend: ↑ = upward; ↓ = downward; ↔ = stable

| Species | Percentage (%) of visits in which species was recorded | | National Trend 1985-2008 |
|---------------|--|-------|-----------------------------|
| | 1980s | 2000s | |
| Sparrowhawk | 0 | 14 | ↑ |
| Kestrel | 8 | 0 | ↓ |
| Stock Dove | 0 | 18 | ↔ |
| Woodpigeon | 99 | 100 | ↑ |
| Collared Dove | 1 | 25 | ↑ |
| Cuckoo | 3 | 0 | ↓ |

| Species | Percentage (%) of visits in which species was recorded | | National Trend 1985-2008 |
|---------------------------|--|-------|-----------------------------|
| | 1980s | 2000s | |
| Common Swift | 47 | 15 | ↓ (95-08) |
| Green Woodpecker | 1 | 46 | ↑ |
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | 19 | 90 | ↑ |
| Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | 4 | 3 | ↓ |
| Swallow | 11 | 3 | ↑ |
| House Martin | 39 | 0 | ↓ |
| Wren | 61 | 99 | ↑ |
| Dunnock | 53 | 36 | ↔ |
| Robin | 92 | 99 | ↑ |
| Blackbird | 99 | 100 | ↔ |
| Song Thrush | 78 | 40 | ↔ |
| Mistle Thrush | 49 | 28 | ↓ |
| Blackcap | 10 | 64 | ↑ |
| Common Chiffchaff | 1 | 49 | ↑ |
| Willow Warbler | 6 | 3 | ↓ |
| Goldcrest | 4 | 11 | ↔ |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 1 | 0 | ↓ |
| Long-tailed Tit | 22 | 32 | ↑ |
| Blue Tit | 97 | 97 | ↔ |
| Great Tit | 83 | 96 | ↑ |
| Coal Tit | 18 | 1 | ↔ |
| Marsh Tit | 1 | 0 | ↓ |
| Nuthatch | 56 | 4 | ↑ |
| Treecreeper | 25 | 18 | ↔ |
| Jay | 72 | 75 | ↔ |
| Magpie | 99 | 96 | ↔ |
| Jackdaw | 0 | 29 | ↑ |
| Carrion Crow | 61 | 100 | ↑ |
| Starling | 89 | 22 | ↓ |
| House Sparrow | 97 | 21 | ↓ |
| Chaffinch | 33 | 38 | ↔ |
| Greenfinch | 61 | 25 | ↑ |
| Goldfinch | 10 | 0 | ↑ |
| Bullfinch | 13 | 0 | ↓ |

A remarkable number of species showed a significant difference in occurrence between the two periods, especially considering that the presence/absence measure used is insensitive to changes in the abundance of common species, such as the Blackbird, Blue Tit or Magpie.

Declining species

Of the six species already mentioned as having disappeared as breeding species, in four cases the decline was large and statistically significant (Kestrel, House Martin, Nuthatch and Bullfinch). Of these, only Nuthatch was recorded during the 2000s, perhaps wanderers

from Epping Forest. In contrast, Swallow and Spotted Flycatcher were already scarce in the 1980s. Marsh Tit and Cuckoo may well have also been former breeders. With the exception of Nuthatch and Swallow, all the above species were declining nationally between 1980 and 2008, so it is perhaps no surprise that they feature as declining species for this site.

According to the BTO graphs, Nuthatch and Swallow have both increased their national population since 1985. Nuthatch remains widespread in London and still breeds in Kensington Gardens and other urban sites, so local factors may be responsible for its apparent demise in Larks Wood. With occasional spring and autumn records still occurring in most years, hopefully this species will breed again in the near future. For Swallow, the upward trend since 1985 followed a sharp decline in the early 1980s. A single nest in an open garage, about 100 metres from the wood, probably accounted for most of the records in the 1980s. Although the species is still seen occasionally on passage, I am not aware of any buildings that would currently offer a suitable breeding site.

The other species that are encountered significantly less frequently than they were in the 1980s include four additional species that have suffered national declines (Common Swift, Mistle Thrush, Starling and House Sparrow), and a fifth species that is red-listed as a result of a longer-term population decline, in spite of a relatively stable trend since the 1980s (Song Thrush). All still breed in or around the wood, but have disappeared from some of the areas where they used to be found, making them less likely to be recorded on any particular visit.

However, as for the Nuthatch (above), the fall in occurrence of Coal Tit, Greenfinch and Goldfinch cannot be explained by national or local declines, as all are stable or increasing according to National and London monitoring statistics trends. Greenfinch may possibly have suffered recent declines due to trichomonosis - however, most of the visits in the 2000s were made before this outbreak occurred, so this cannot explain the reduced occurrences. The area favoured by this species in the 1980s was a managed area of the wood which was more open and dominated by Hawthorn. It has been left to become overgrown, so presumably no longer provides an ideal micro-habitat for the species. Local factors or similar unobserved micro-habitat changes may account for the lower occurrences of Nuthatch, Coal Tit and Goldfinch.

Increasing species

Any discussion of increasing species in Larks Wood is complicated by the fact that my birding skills have improved since the mid-1980s, in particular my knowledge of songs and calls. As a result, some higher occurrences may simply be due to the fact that I am now able to recognise songs and calls of species I mainly recorded by sight during some of my earlier visits in the 1980s. As any experienced birder knows, this can make a significant difference to whether or not a species is recorded on a particular visit. Thus, the increased occurrence of Wren could be due to the fact that I may have been unfamiliar with the call initially, and the increased rates for Stock Dove and Blackcap may be caused by my lack of experience of their songs at the time. It should be noted, however, that both Wren and Blackcap have shown positive national trends since the 1980s, so the increased occurrence in Larks Wood may relate to a genuine increase.

Likewise, the change in occurrence of Sparrowhawk may result from the fact that I

now recognise the likely presence of a Sparrowhawk from the alarm calls of songbirds, and look up to find it. However, given that this species has continued to increase its population and expand its range in recent years, it is equally likely that new birds moved into the wood in the 1990s or 2000s.

The increases shown by several other species are undoubtedly real. Green Woodpecker was recorded only once during the 1980s, on April 19th 1986, and according to my notes was then identified by its yaffling call. In the 2000s, it was recorded on nearly 50% of visits, again mostly from calls, with territories held in 2002 and 2008, though breeding has not been confirmed. My notes confirm that I also knew the call of Great Spotted Woodpecker in the mid-1980s (as well as the obvious drumming 'song'). One or two pairs bred at the time, but the species is now easily found throughout the wood, with a total of eight active nests being located in 2007. In the case of Carrion Crow, the change in status is backed up by counts, due to its habit of regularly gathering on playing fields. In the 1980s, the count was normally between one and three birds, with a count of four on six dates, and a maximum of five on November 22nd 1987. It is now too numerous for me to record numbers regularly: of a maximum count of 88 made on February 24th 2007, the majority were on the fields but other birds were scattered through the woods. Common Chiffchaff is another species with a very obvious song that did not breed during the 1980s, but which now breeds with one to three territories held annually.

Two further, highly visible and vocal, species have colonised the area surrounding the wood, and are sometimes recorded at the edge of the site or as flyovers. Collared Dove was recorded for the first time on March 27th 1989, on the final visit included in the early data set. It became more frequent during the 1990s and is now resident in several of the surrounding streets. Jackdaw is a more recent colonist which has appeared in the last ten years and is also now a common resident. In late afternoon, the resident Jackdaws are joined by other birds, presumably mostly from the local area, and flocks of c.200 can be seen circling argumentatively before settling down to roost in the wood.

Again, there is a link between the species that have shown increased occurrences in Larks Wood, and the national trends for these species. All of the species mentioned have increasing populations in the UK over this same time period.

Other studies

Although occurrence does not increase simply with increasing actual numbers, it is interesting that many of the changes that I have observed match known population trends. Many of the species that are declining or have disappeared altogether show declining population trends, and many are red or amber listed as a result. For some species, the declines in London are sadly not just restricted to urban areas but are more widespread. Recent bird reports, and early data from the London Atlas project, both suggest that Spotted Flycatcher and Marsh Tit now have a much reduced range as breeding birds in the London Area.

Likewise, the upward trend for most of the species that I encountered more frequently in the 2000s is supported by other studies. A comparison of data from 405 broadleaved woodland sites, collected in the mid-1980s and 2003-04 (Hewson et al), showed large national increases for 11 species including Blackcap, Common Chiffchaff, Great Spotted Woodpecker and Green Woodpecker, all showing increased occurrence in Larks Wood.

Data from transect walks carried out by volunteers in Royal Parks showed a six-fold increase in Jackdaw numbers in Richmond Park between 1998 and 2008, and a four-fold increase in Greenwich Park between 2003 and 2008. Early Atlas data also confirms a range expansion for this species. Interestingly, The Royal Parks data also shows contrasting trends for Carrion Crow at the two sites, with numbers trebling at Greenwich Park but showing a significant decline in Richmond Park.

According to the 'Ideal Free Distribution' (Fretwell & Lucas 1969), as the general population level of a species increases, the best habitat fills to saturation first, then the next-best habitat and so on. The converse occurs as the general population decreases. This leads to the numbers in any one small area being more variable than the average across all habitats. There is some suggestion that Larks Wood reflects this pattern, as the apparent increase of many species (Stock Dove, Sparrowhawk, Common Chiffchaff, Green Woodpecker, Jackdaw, Collared Dove, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Blackcap) was greater there than might be expected from the national trends (www.bto.org/about-birds/bird-trends) and the decrease for others (House Martin, Bullfinch, House Sparrow, Starling) was also larger than might be expected from the national decrease.

Unfortunately, the lack of reliable counts during the 1980s means that it is not possible to comment about the status of the most common species that were recorded on almost all visits in both the 1980s and 2000s (Woodpigeon, Robin, Blackbird, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Magpie). The national trend for all these species is stable or upwards. However, the most interesting species of the group is Blackbird. Unlike the others, this has declined in London by 16% between 1995 and 2008, according to BBS data. Regular autumn counts in Kensington Gardens showed a fall of 67% there, which Roy Sanderson attributed to the removal of fallen leaves in autumn. This is not a problem that occurs in Larks Wood, where fallen leaves are plentiful. However, although I do not have any data to back it up, I believe that Blackbirds may also have declined in Larks Wood, possibly due to a reduced area of ground cover due to recreational pressure.

Conclusion

The results will probably be familiar to many woodland patch-workers in London, who will be able to recall similar changes at their own sites. They confirm the unremarkable ornithological nature of Larks Wood in a London context. It is likely to be representative of many similar woodlands in urban areas.

Changes in bird populations and their distributions have, of course, always occurred, and will continue to occur in the future. It is to be hoped that, during the next twenty years, we will see more increasing species than we do decreasing species.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Dr David Dawson for his comments on an earlier draft, and for suggesting a number of changes and additions which I have incorporated into the final article. In particular, these include the use of Chi-squared tests to compare data between the two periods, and the paragraph about the 'Ideal Free Distribution'.

Thanks are also due to Dr Nigel Reeve of The Royal Parks for permission to use transect walk data.

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Appendix - List of Birds recorded in Larks Wood (1980-2010)

F=Flyover only

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Mute Swan (F) | Common Swift | Goldcrest |
| Canada Goose (F) | Green Woodpecker | Spotted Flycatcher |
| Mallard | Great Spotted Woodpecker | Long-tailed Tit |
| Tufted Duck (F) | Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | Marsh Tit |
| Goosander (F) | Swallow | Coal Tit |
| Cormorant (F) | House Martin | Blue Tit |
| Grey Heron (F) | Meadow Pipit (F) | Great Tit |
| Sparrowhawk | Grey Wagtail (F) | Nuthatch |
| Common Buzzard (F) | Pied Wagtail | Treecreeper |
| Kestrel | Wren | Jay |
| Woodcock | Duncock | Magpie |
| Black-headed Gull | Robin | Jackdaw |
| Common Gull | Blackbird | Rook (F) |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | Fieldfare | Carriion Crow |
| Herring Gull | Song Thrush | Starling |
| Common Tern (F) | Redwing | House Sparrow |
| Feral Rock Dove | Mistle Thrush | Chaffinch |
| Stock Dove | Lesser Whitethroat | Greenfinch |
| Woodpigeon | Common Whitethroat | Goldfinch |
| Collared Dove | Garden Warbler | Siskin (F) |
| Ring-necked Parakeet | Blackcap | Linnet |
| Cuckoo | Common Chiffchaff | Lesser Redpoll |
| Tawny Owl | Willow Warbler | Bullfinch |

THE BROWN SHRIKE AT STAINES MOOR

JOHN GATES AND CHRIS HEARD

Discovery and initial thoughts, John Gates

I was birding at Staines Reservoir, Surrey, on Sunday October 11th 2009 when I met up with Pete Naylor, who told me that a Dartford Warbler had been seen recently at nearby Staines Moor. I went to look for it later that morning, but failed to find it. However, a different bird caught my eye. I knew instantly that it was some sort of shrike, so I phoned Pete (who by then was continuing his duck count on the adjacent King George VI Reservoir). He came over to join me and, although the bird had briefly disappeared, we soon managed to relocate it. It was very obviously a young Red-backed Shrike-type. We had no books with us, but Franco Maroevic soon appeared on site and produced his *Collins Bird Guide* (Svensson & Grant 1999) and we checked out all the possibilities.

In addition to discussing the likelihood of it being a Red-backed Shrike, we discussed and dismissed the possibility of it being an Isabelline Shrike, and considered the possibility of it being a Brown Shrike. Our bird certainly did not look like the depiction of Brown Shrike at the back of the guide (which is an adult, painted in miniature in the margin of the vagrants section), and Pete did not think it looked like the only Brown Shrike he had seen previously, in Ireland (unsurprisingly in retrospect, as that was an adult), and the discussion continued. I had dipped on the Brown Shrike at Flamborough Head, East Yorkshire, in September 2008, so had no experience of the species at all.

Obviously, the best thing to do was to put the news out anyway; being a local rarity, even a Red-backed Shrike was surely worthy of that, plus we did not want to be condemned for suppressing anything! By the time I left Staines Moor, a succession of other birders had begun to arrive and, as a parting shot, I jokingly told them not to rush, as it was only a Brown Shrike after all.... The bird was settled and was not bothered by passing dog-walkers and, by the end of the day, about 40 birders had turned out in the expectation of seeing a Red-backed Shrike.

That evening, I checked out Paul Doherty's *Birdwatching in Goa* DVD (2006), and saw that there was some similarity between the Brown Shrike shown there and my bird, and the real possibility of it being a Brown Shrike must have gone through other people's minds too. But it was not until the next day that Chris Heard came along and confirmed the identification: it was a Brown Shrike.

Identification, Chris Heard

On the morning of October 11th, a Red-backed Shrike was reported on Staines Moor but, as there had been one there in September 2005, I was not in any hurry to go and see it. It was still present the following morning, and I made a mental note to take a look, but a message was then relayed to me from Rob Innes, via Birdline South East, that it might warrant closer examination.

Arriving soon after midday, I was met by a dozen observers leaving the site, all having had good views of the bird. It took me a while to relocate it - now perched on the northernmost hedge - and, in the bright sunshine, the upperparts appeared to be a pale

greyish-brown and, superficially, it did appear to be a Red-backed Shrike. Except for one detail: the tail looked a bit long. I got closer views, to determine the bird's age, and concluded that it was in its first winter, retaining some scaly juvenile feathers mainly on the centre of the mantle and some of the scapulars. The warm brown crown and nape were surprisingly unmarked, however, and the hindneck lacked Red-backed Shrike's usual grey tone. When it turned to face me, I could see that, on the underside of the tail, the outermost feathers were little more than half the length of the tail and the penultimate pair also fell well short. It clearly had a graduated tail shape - which is a well-known feature of Brown Shrike - so I needed to check other features. When I examined the rather short primary projection, I could see that there were just five primary tips extending beyond the tertials on the closed wing.

Birders were still coming and going and several asked me if I thought it had a rufous tail (many had evidently read Rob's comment on the londonbirders news group)... but seemed happy to depart, presumably satisfied that it wasn't an Isabelline Shrike! When some dog-walkers flushed the bird, I went to my car and checked my observations against a Field Guide. There were some discrepancies, but the *combination* of structural features convinced me that it truly was a Brown Shrike.

I returned to the bird to find another batch of birders watching it (there had now been 12 pager updates on the 'Red-backed Shrike'). So, after discussing my verdict with various bird news services, and a few friends, I released the news as a 'definite Brown Shrike' half an hour later. Other birders soon started arriving and I was glad to find that no one disagreed with my identification. In fact the main problem, both that afternoon and in subsequent internet discussions, was people's misconceptions of how to assess features such as the primary projection (it is worth pointing out that a feature like this is often easier to judge in real time than in the 'frozen moment' of a photograph).

Description

Obvious *Lanius* shrike, superficially very like Red-backed Shrike - but with longer tail (which, when tightly closed, looked very narrow).

Crown, nape and hindneck medium-tone, warm brown (not rufous) - with no grey tone to nape/sides of neck (as in Red-backed Shrike); blackish mask (but only looked this dark in 'cold' light) and lores (not quite as dark); 'cream' rear supercilium, with fore-supercilium duller and much narrower.

Upperparts same warm brown as head, mostly plain, but with some rather indistinct bars on centre of mantle and some scapulars. Greater coverts brown with paler buff tips and dark sub-terminal bar. Paler buff fringes to tertials - forming a panel (but not strikingly so). Primaries dark with five primary tips visible on fully-closed wing: longest two closely-spaced, then quite a wide gap to the next three distinctly pale-fringed primary tips. Upper-tail coverts brighter, rufous-brown with darker scaling. Tail warm brown - slightly warmer than upperparts but still not rufous; outermost tail-feathers paler, with paler tips to feathers (but not edged whitish on outer web). Tail long (at times seeming equal to body-length!) and very narrow when tightly closed (could even look like a 'stick' attached to a bird) and NEVER looked square-ended - because outer tail-feathers significantly shorter: outermost less than two-thirds of tail-length; penultimate outermost not as short, but these and third outermost pair also fell short of tail tip (these details

quite easily perceived when viewing the underside of the tail - but short outermost also easy to see on upperside of tail and, at times, even in flight).

Throat to centre of breast and belly cream-white, sides duller, and whole of flanks barred with brown (but, unlike Lewington *et al*, no fulvous wash to lower flanks).

Bill quite stout (but not as distinctly as in many Brown Shrike photos), with hooked tip (obvious in close views); whole culmen and tip of lower mandible dark grey; bill-base and cutting edge of upper mandible grey-brown.

Status in Britain and Ireland, Chris Heard

Brown Shrike has had a difficult time consolidating its place on the British and Irish List, with the recognition of first-winter birds having been dogged by misidentifications.

Despite a vast breeding range in Siberia, and a similarly wide winter distribution in South and South-east Asia, this species was not added to the British List until 1985 - when Mark Chapman found an adult at Sumburgh, Shetland on September 30th. The next record - also an adult - was at Ballyferriter, Co. Kerry during November-December 1999. A first-winter bird was found on Fair Isle in October 2000, but was only correctly identified when it was trapped, and a first-winter bird the following year on Bryher, Isles of Scilly was famously only identified in retrospect - from photos posted on the Surfbirds website (having been passed over as a Red-backed Shrike by those who saw it in the field). Subsequent adults on Whalsay (September 2004) and Flamborough Head (September 2008) were followed by a first-winter bird on North Uist (November 2008) which was initially misidentified as an Isabelline Shrike. To further underline the problem, a claimed first-winter Brown Shrike, on Scilly in 2008, proved to be a Red-backed Shrike (Vinicombe, 2009).

The Staines bird was the eighth accepted record for Britain and Ireland. More notably, it was the first for an inland county and this was the first time that a first-winter Brown Shrike was conclusively identified in the field - without resorting to photos or trapping. With its extended stay, and proximity to the M25 motorway, it proved to be one of the most widely twitched rarities of 2009, ensuring that a huge number of observers got to see it. Perhaps this will reduce the likelihood of future identification problems.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Steve Gantlett and Richard Millington at Birding World for permission to use the text of their article by John Gates.

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BIRD HIGHLIGHTS AT ALEXANDRA PARK

ANDREW GARDENER

Another record-breaking year with an exceptional species tally of 118, compared to last year's total of 110. Another two new species were added to the all-time list, with the addition of Common Scoter and Alpine Swift, bringing the overall total to 169 species for the Study Area. Each of these new species stayed around for a few hours, allowing most local birders the opportunity to observe them.

As usual, there were some highs and lows for the year. On the downside, after last year's record five pairs of Nuthatch, this year we were down to only two; it was hoped that this species would expand more throughout the Park. There was only one sighting of Sedge Warbler this year, and Northern Wheatear was only seen on six dates - three spring and three autumn.

Notwithstanding, the highs greatly outnumber the lows. On the breeding front, Little Grebes finally managed to successfully breed - and not just one pair, but two, each fledging four young. There was also a juvenile Cuckoo seen around the animal enclosures for a while during late summer, which means there was a good chance it was hatched locally. There was a great deal of Egyptian Goose activity around the boating pond early in the spring, but nothing came of that.

Raptors did well, with eight species seen in the Study Area, including Honey Buzzard and Osprey. Little Egret put in, what is hoped will be, its annual appearance, as did Common Buzzard, Red Kite, Pied Flycatcher, Wood Warbler and Ring Ouzel.

Oystercatcher, European Golden Plover, Nightingale and Rock Pipit were also notable sightings, being only the fourth, second, second and third records respectively. Amazingly, there were also two records of Sandwich Tern, being the fifth and six records for this species; and putting in a welcome, if overdue, appearance was Woodlark, which was seen for the first time since 1979.

Common Snipe, Woodcock and Common Sandpiper had good years too, with a number of local birders adding them to their lists. Overall, a bumper year for sightings in the Park - and let us hope it continues.

Andrew Gardener, 50 Springfield Avenue, Muswell Hill, London, N10 3SY

BIRD HIGHLIGHTS AT BEDDINGTON FARMLANDS

KEVIN GUEST

Beddington Farmlands' mixed habitats attracted a variety of species throughout the year. The refuse tip attracted large numbers of gulls. The lake had good numbers of wintering wildfowl and passage waders. The Southeast corner and 100 Acre hosted breeding birds. Ringing took place in the storm tanks. A colony of Tree Sparrows remained on site all year. Peregrine Falcons were regular visitors throughout the year.

Seasonal Regulars

Winter: Long-eared Owls, Little Egret, Green Sandpiper, Water Pipit, Common Snipe, Jack Snipe, Water Rail and Common Chiffchaff wintered. Shelduck and European Stonechat were present. Caspian Gull, Yellow-legged Gull and Mediterranean Gull were visitors to the refuse tip.

Spring: Yellow Wagtail, Northern Wheatear, Common Snipe, Redshank, Greenshank, Ringed Plover, Little Ringed Plover and Common Sandpiper visited the farm. Common Buzzards and Red Kite were seen on passage.

Summer: Hobby, Green Sandpiper and Common Sandpiper were regularly seen.

Autumn: Green Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper and Common Buzzard. Mediterranean and Yellow-legged Gulls were regularly seen on the refuse tip.

January: From the 1st until the 5th and from 15th to the 23rd an Iceland Gull was noted. A Woodcock was seen on the 3rd, 4th and 7th. A Dartford Warbler was noted on the 3rd and 9th. A Waxwing flew W and a Glaucous Gull and Long-eared Owls were noted on the 4th. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker visited the feeders on the 10th. Long-eared Owls were also noted on the 18th and 26th.

February: Five Long-eared Owls were noted on the 1st and 28th. An Iceland Gull was present between the 3rd and 5th and the 19th and 28th. A count of 21 Skylarks on the 8th. A Dunlin was recorded on the 21st.

March: This month featured several raptors including a Marsh Harrier which flew SW on the 19th. A Red Kite was seen on the 15th and 22nd. Common Buzzard passage started from the 15th. An Iceland Gull was noted on the 11th, 15th, 16th and 29th. A Woodcock and Northern Wheatear were seen on the 15th. Dunlin were noted on the 14th, 15th and 18th. A Mandarin and a Dartford Warbler were seen on the 21st.

April: This month produced an Iceland Gull between the 10th and 20th. Dunlin were noted on the 17th and 22nd. A Grey Plover, Golden Plover and Black-tailed Godwits were seen on the 13th, the latter remaining on the 14th. A Marsh Harrier flew NW on the 14th. Whimbrel were noted on the 12th, five flew E on the 14th and 14 on the 17th. Arctic Tern, a Little Tern and nine Little Gulls were noted on the 17th. A second Little Tern was seen on the 24th. A Little Gull was noted on the 26th. A Ring Ouzel was present on the 17th and 19th.

May: A Whinchat was noted on the 2nd. A Raven flew E over the lake on the 3rd. Arctic Terns featured between the 6th and 10th. A Turtle Dove was seen on the 8th and 15th. A Marsh Harrier drifted SW on the 9th. An Iceland Gull was present between the 9th and 29th. A Black Tern, Grey Plover, Sanderling and Turnstone were noted on the 13th. Sandwich Tern and Whimbrel were seen on the 14th. A Blue-headed Wagtail was recorded on the 20th. Oystercatcher were noted on the 22nd.

June: A quiet month with Mediterranean Gulls noted from the 3rd. Sandwich Tern visited the lake on the 26th and 28th.

July: Six Little Egret and 42 Green Sandpipers were noted on the 1st. Oystercatcher were noted on the 11th. Five Crossbills flew over the lake on the 13th. A Whimbrel was noted on the 26th. A Black-tailed Godwit was seen on the 30th.

August: Black-tailed Godwits were seen on the 5th, 10th, 11th and 12th. A Whimbrel was recorded on the 7th. Dunlin were recorded on the 8th and 9th. A Cuckoo was seen on the 14th and 18th. A Wood Sandpiper was regularly noted from the 14th until the 30th. A Marsh Harrier flew W on the 18th and S on the 21st. Twelve Little Egret were seen on the 22nd. A Tree Pipit flew over the lake on the 23rd. An Osprey flew S on the 30th. A Whinchat stayed for two days from the 30th.

September: A Spotted Flycatcher was noted on the 2nd, 13th and 24th. A Wood Sandpiper was irregularly noted between the 3rd and the 16th. A Tree Pipit was seen on the 4th and 12th. A Raven flew low near the lake on the 5th. Dunlin and two Whinchat were seen on the 6th; Whinchat were also recorded on the 13th and 27th. A Kittiwake flew W on the 7th. A Marsh Harrier flew NW on the 10th. A Little Stint was noted on the 14th and between the 16th and 18th.

October: Eight Black-tailed Godwit were noted on the 2nd. Six Dunlin were seen on the 4th. A Curlew was seen on the 5th. A Marsh Harrier flew W on the 7th. A Cetti's Warbler spent a day by the hide on the 8th. A Rock Pipit was present on the 18th. A Snow Bunting flew WSW on the 20th. A Ring Ouzel flew SW on the 29th.

November: This month saw the return of Caspian, Yellow-legged and Mediterranean Gulls to the tip. A Golden Plover was noted and a Marsh Harrier flew SW on the 8th.

December: A very quiet month with a Goosander noted on the 8th. A flock of eight Golden Plover flew over the farm on the 22nd, 23rd and 30th.

Kevin Guest, Beddington Farm Bird Group.

Editorial note: A report of a Glaucous-winged Gull is still being considered by the BBRC. (See Appendix III for details of this record.)

BIRD HIGHLIGHTS AT BRENT RESERVOIR

ANDREW VERRALL

The year turned out to be one of the best for the number of species seen: 148 were noted, this equalling the highest ever count. There were no extreme rarities, but a lot of good birds were seen; also, some maximum number records were broken, which always adds something to the local birding. There were plenty of waders, helped by some permanent mud, and the visible-migration (Vis-Mig) sessions were full of interest in autumn. Many days were covered this year and, from time to time, a good bird attracted a small crowd. For regular watchers it gets more interesting as time passes; there are always more things to learn and new things to see, so in these ways too, this year was one of the best.

January: The New Year started with the usual species count on 1st, a wintering Blackcap and a Firecrest helping the total to about 50 species - a good start. Two Firecrests were seen the following day, a Little Owl was heard calling on 10th, then on 17th a Bittern was seen flying into the reeds, never to be seen again. Some interesting roost counts were made: 120 Carrion Crows in North Marsh and 50 Ring-necked Parakeets on 25th, and 25 Cormorants on Willow Island on 29th. Also on 29th, a Jack Snipe was feeding in East Marsh, a Long-eared Owl was hunting - but its roost site was never found - and an adult Mediterranean Gull was seen.

February: The month started with a lone Shelduck on 5th. Water Rails were often heard and sometimes seen. Common Snipe numbers rose to a record count of 53 on 7th. This

Inland Cormorants Phalacrocorax carbo face the problems of frozen waterbodies, but London's reservoirs usually offer the potential to feed. (Andrew Moon)



date also produced a one-day invasion of Fieldfares, 528 in all; the fields were covered with 340 while 188 flew over - an impressive sight. Also on 7th, a pair of Tawny Owls were found at a day-time roost, 12 Skylarks were feeding on the fields and a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was seen. The Mediterranean Gull reappeared on 12th, and the Firecrest and Jack Snipe on 18th. Then on 19th, a Redshank flew in with 19 Northern Lapwings to feed on the mud and a Shelduck appeared on the water. Another good day was 21st when a wintering Common Chiffchaff, the Mediterranean Gull, a Jack Snipe and a female Peregrine Falcon were seen. This winter month ended with a European Stonechat on 26th.

March: A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was found drumming on 1st and three Reed Buntings were singing. Following a night of gales, an adult Kittiwake came in on 9th, and the locally-rare Knot was seen on 10th. A Woodcock was flushed on 15th, then a Pheasant on 21st stayed around for a few weeks. With Blackcaps and Common Chiffchaffs around, it is difficult to say exactly which day is the start of 'birding spring'; but the 21st stands out for the earliest ever Little Ringed Plover, five Common Chiffchaffs singing and Little Egret, Peregrine Falcon and Common Buzzard being seen. A Goosander flew over on 22nd. More early spring birds were a superb male White Wagtail with six Pied Wagtails after a heavy shower on 25th, a pair of Garganey on 29th and two Swallows on 31st.

April: Five Sand Martins, eight Common Chiffchaffs and a male Peregrine Falcon on 2nd got the month off to a good start, with a male Northern Wheatear the following day. But the 4th turned out to be one of the best days of spring, with a summer-plumaged Black-necked Grebe, a feeding Oystercatcher, a feeding Rock Pipit, another Northern Wheatear, eight singing Blackcaps and 12 singing Common Chiffchaffs. The first Common Tern flew north on 9th, Common Sandpiper was seen on 10th and a Curlew landed briefly on 11th; and, as often happens in spring, a pair of Great Black-backed Gulls appeared on the rafts the same day. An Avocet spent the whole day around East Marsh on 13th, and for a few minutes was in the same scope view as a male Yellow Wagtail. Then on 15th, another Northern Wheatear, Common Whitethroat and Common Sandpiper appeared, to be followed on 16th by two Little Gulls, an Arctic Tern, Common Buzzard, Reed Warbler and Yellow Wagtail, with a late Common Goldeneye on 17th and the two Little Gulls still present. A Jack Snipe was present from 18th to 20th, another Little Gull on 20th, and the Blackcap number had increased to 21 singing males by 23rd, on which date a Redshank and Common Buzzard were seen. With Common Terns having increased to 22 by 24th, two Sandwich Terns flew over the rafts, calling, then off east, and later the same morning a Red Kite drifted over and headed off south.

May: The Spring Birdcount Day on 2nd was full of interest: a Hobby flew around; 42 Common Terns were present; 34 Blackcaps, 14 Common Whitethroats and ten Sedge Warblers were singing; and both Yellow and White Wagtail were noted. It was a good month for waders too, starting with two Greenshank and a Bar-tailed Godwit on 3rd, then five further species on 5th - two Wood Sandpipers, two Dunlin, a Common Snipe, three Little Ringed Plovers and four Northern Lapwings, then five Common Sandpipers on 7th, when another two Yellow Wagtails came in. Northern Lapwings probably bred, but the nests were abandoned. Wader records continued with Dunlin on 11th, and a pair of Little Ringed Plovers mating and four Ringed Plovers feeding on the mud on 12th. On



Peregrine Falcon. (Robert Callf)

13th, six Black Terns and six wader species were present, including a Sanderling, a Ringed Plover, two Dunlin and seven Common Sandpipers. Two of the Ringed Plovers were still there on 14th, when another Common Buzzard flew over. Bird of the Year must go to the adult Spoonbill that appeared in front of the small Heron Hide on 16th, on the ground, in the water, there to be seen from 09:00 until 14:35 hrs when, sadly, it flew off. This great month continued with Oystercatcher and Peregrine Falcon sightings on 17th, another Oystercatcher on 21st and a Little Egret on 22nd. Other good May birds were Redshank on 25th and Little Tern on 30th.

June: A Black Tern on 1st and Greenshank on 4th started this normally quiet month. The first big gathering of Common Swifts - at least 400 - were counted on 6th. Then a few more waders - Common

Sandpiper on 7th and Redshank on 8th - and a Mediterranean Gull on 9th. Now all but one of the Common Tern chicks were eaten by the breeding Lesser Black-backed Gulls to feed their young; the surviving chick had fallen into the water and drifted over to the mud, and the two adults continued to feed it. Common Terns are said to be single-brooded, but about 15 pairs (about three-quarters of the colony) re-laid - not a second brood but a re-laying - and most of these chicks survived, owing to the terns being more aggressive and the gulls needing less food for their young. Some summer waders were seen, including Ringed Plover on 13th, Redshank on 16th, and two Green Sandpipers and three Redshank on 20th, one of the latter staying all week.

July: On 2nd there were seven species of wader present: a summer-plumaged Ruff, black with a chestnut ruff, Green and Common Sandpiper, Greenshank, Redshank, Little Ringed Plover and six Northern Lapwings. There were two Yellow Wagtails and six Common Sandpipers on 4th, a Greenshank on 5th and 8th, and Common Snipe on 10th. A count was made on 12th of 56 Common Terns and 15 Great Crested Grebe nests, and a Greenshank and two Common Sandpipers were seen. Waders continued, with two Greenshank on 13th, Dunlin and Ringed Plover on 14th, two Dunlin and two Greenshank on 16th, and six Common Sandpipers 20th to 23rd. The only Nuthatch of the year was found on 25th. July ended with two Redshank on 26th, a flock of 300 Common Swifts on 27th and Dunlin on 30th.

August: A Wood Sandpiper was feeding on the mud on 1st, the first Water Rail of autumn was seen on 2nd, and a Whimbrel flew over calling on 4th. With a Little Egret on 8th there were four Green Sandpipers, and the Common Sandpiper total reached 13 by 11th. From the Common Tern replacement broods, 26 chicks were counted on 12th. A Hobby flew south on 15th, then a juvenile Black-necked Grebe made an appearance on 16th, and two juvenile Shelduck. On 18th, three Greenshank were seen with two juvenile Ruff; the Ruff stayed most of the month, but one of them was seen dead, of unknown cause, on the mud on 25th. Black-necked Grebe was noted again on 21st, then on 22nd a



Despite only 20 London records of Spoonbill Platalea leucorodia prior to 2006, the following three years saw up to 16 more. The upsurge continued in 2009: this individual was at Brent Reservoir in mid-May. (Tony Donetti)

female/juvenile Marsh Harrier circled over the reservoir, to be joined by a Common Buzzard; another Little Egret was also seen on 22nd. The list on 23rd included Little Egret, two Shelduck, the two Ruff, two Green Sandpipers, five Common Sandpipers, 50 Common Terns and two Black Terns - a very good day. One of the Black Terns stayed for several days, and a Black-necked Grebe stayed from 25th into the following month. Other good August birds were Arctic Tern on 26th, Common Redstart on 27th, Little Egret on 30th, and Dunlin and Ruff on 31st, when a Yellow Wagtail and two Spotted Flycatchers were also seen.

September: An adult male Common Redstart was found on 2nd and a Little Egret was still present, then on 5th an influx of migrants included a Grasshopper Warbler, 22 Common Chiffchaffs, Nightingale, Tree Pipit and three Yellow Wagtails. This continued on 6th when a Northern Wheatear and a Yellow Wagtail were seen, the 7th produced a Whinchat and a Spotted Flycatcher, then on 12th a Peregrine Falcon and the first Siskin of autumn flew over. The 13th started with a Common Snipe, three Common Sandpipers, two Spotted Flycatchers and a Whinchat; then some excitement: a new species for the reservoir, the first ever Montagu's Harrier, a female or immature, flew over the Dump - surely joint Bird of the Year with the spring Spoonbill. More good birds followed: two Dunlin on 14th, 29 Eurasian Wigeon on 15th (20+ stayed to the end of the year), Scaup on 17th for two days, and a female Merlin hunting over the playing fields. A female Pintail appeared on 18th, then a movement of 50+ Sand Martins and 190 House Martins headed south on 19th. An excellent month ended with a count of 130+ Shoveler on 23rd, a Common Buzzard on 27th and five Red-crested Pochard on 29th.

October: A Little Egret was seen on 2nd, then the visible-migration (Vis-Mig) sessions began, with a Skylark over and the last Swallow of the year. There was a Dunlin on 4th, then a pair of Red-crested Pochards on 5th stayed for five days. Common Snipe numbers were already up to 15 by 7th, and on 8th a Redshank was seen. Also on 8th, two House

Martins were the last of the year, seven Siskins flew over, and a European Stonechat was seen. There was a late Reed Warbler on 9th, Brambling over on 10th and nine Siskins on 11th. Two more Bramblings went over on 13th with the first Fieldfare, and c.950 Redwings were counted. On 15th, a Jack Snipe was found on a raft; it soon flew to the mud and was seen several more times during the month. Along with small numbers of other species 1,275 Redwings were counted on 17th. A singing male Cetti's Warbler was found by the hide on 18th, and it stayed for several weeks. A female Pintail was around from 18th for a couple of days, then an immature/eclipse drake on 20th. Single Bramblings flew over on 20th and 23rd, on which date two Jack Snipe were seen; they stayed just into the following month, with a single staying a further two weeks. The Eurasian Wigeon flock had built up to the maximum count of 46 by 24th. Highlights of the Vis-Mig were 31 Jackdaws and 1,800 Woodpigeons on 26th. Common Teal built up to 140+ by 28th, and the returning adult Mediterranean Gull appeared on 30th, being seen intermittently until the end of the year. There was another big Woodpigeon movement on 30th of c.1,830.

November: For some unknown reason Red-crested Pochards don't like the Brent, but there was one on 1st and three on 2nd. The Eurasian Wigeon flock, attracted by an abundance of floating weed and thus plenty of food, built up to 46 birds by 3rd. The annual Woodpigeon movement continued with c.4,100 on 5th. The Cetti's Warbler stayed most of the month near the hide, and was joined by Common Chiffchaff and Blackcap on 7th, when a Water Pipit dropped in calling and nearly landed on a raft before flying off east. Another Little Egret appeared on 8th when, during the Vis-Mig session, a male Merlin flew south and low, suddenly chasing two Chaffinches but missing. Another big Woodpigeon movement on 8th totalled c.1,000 birds. An Oystercatcher on 10th on a raft was another surprise, and a female Scaup was present on 11th and 12th. The last good birds of the month were a Mediterranean Gull, Red-crested Pochard and a Scaup, all on 22nd.

December: A Common Chiffchaff was seen on 1st and 2nd; also on 2nd, a Green Sandpiper and 31 Common Snipe were present, and 25 Lesser Redpolls were feeding in silver birch. The redpolls were counted again on 5th, when a Little Egret was seen. A drake Mandarin Duck, locally rare, flew in on 12th; then on 13th, four Common Chiffchaffs were noted, there was a brief sighting of a female Goosander, and a high count of 302 Tufted Ducks was made. The Eurasian Wigeon had stayed all month, with numbers dropping to 24 by 16th. Another Little Egret was seen on 20th and some good numbers on the WeBS count gave 329 Gadwall, 137 Common Pochard and a female Scaup. Some winter movement occurred on 23rd, with 257 Redwings, 173 Fieldfares and a Skylark over. The year ended with a second record-breaking Common Snipe count of 54 and another Skylark flying over on 28th.

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BIRD HIGHLIGHTS AT CROSSNESS

JOHN ARCHER

This summary covers birds recorded around the Crossness area, including Crossness Nature Reserve, Crossness Southern Marsh, the River Thames from Crossness Point to Belvedere Industrial Estate, Southmere Park and Thamesview Golf Course.

An excellent year saw at least 149 species recorded from the patch, including several rarities. The three Iceland Gulls in March/April and Purple Heron in April drew birdwatchers from all over London and beyond, while other highlights included Glaucous, Caspian and Sabine's Gulls, Great Skua, White-fronted Goose, Red Kite, three Common Scoters, Ruddy Duck, Gannet, Common Guillemot, two Avocets, two Turtle Doves, Pied Flycatcher and Cetti's Warbler.

January: The year kicked off with 66 species recorded on 1st, including the annual peak count of 345 Northern Lapwings, a Water Pipit by the Outfall and a pair of Barn Owls in the box. A Woodcock flushed from the Protected Area on 5th was the first of a series of records during the winter, with further sightings on 29th and 30th. A Jack Snipe flushed from the dyke by West Paddock on 9th showed very well beside the Outfall the following day. The 11th saw a Ruff by the Outfall and the first Little Egret of the year. The cold weather brought increased numbers of diving ducks to Southmere Lake, with numbers peaking on 11th at 68 Pochard and 96 Tufted Duck. A Water Rail was on Southern Marsh on 16th. The only Spotted Redshank of the year was reported from the foreshore on 27th. A Water Pipit was again near the Outfall on 30th.

February: A Barn Owl and a Little Egret were seen on 4th. The Woodcock continued to show occasionally, and was flushed from the Protected Area on 14th and 21st, and from the footpath south of the Sewage Works on 15th. The cold snap in the second week of the month brought good numbers of Fieldfares to Southern Marsh, peaking at 100 on 15th. Also on 15th, a Water Rail was heard in the Protected Area, remaining into March, and two more were on Southern Marsh. That date also saw three Jackdaws on Southern Marsh; unusually for Jackdaws at Crossness, they hung around, increasing to four on 22nd.

March: On 1st, a Barn Owl was again in the Protected Area, and was seen off and on at the mouth of the box throughout the spring, raising hopes of breeding; but examination of the boxes proved disappointing, with no signs of a breeding attempt this year. Also on 1st, a Little Egret was briefly in Lagoon Field, and a first-winter Mediterranean Gull was on Southmere Lake. The latter was followed closely by two adults by the Outfall on 7th, and the first-winter reappeared off the Golf Centre on 14th. A juvenile Glaucous Gull on the Thames at Belvedere on 10th was making a brief visit from across the river, where it had been seen around Rainham. The first spring migrants of the year appeared on 14th, with at least three Common Chiffchaffs, and three male Northern Wheatears on East Paddock. This was the start of a good passage of Northern Wheatears, with a further eight recorded during the month. Another Jackdaw was seen on 15th, but more typically just flew over. The first Black Redstart of the year was beside the river at Belvedere on

20th. A Common Buzzard flew low over the Incinerator on 21st, the first of a good series of records of this species. The first major birding excitement of the year was sparked when two Iceland Gulls, a first-summer and a juvenile, were found off the Golf Centre on 29th. The first-summer was never seen again, but the juvenile lingered on the river until April 24th. Also on 29th, three White-fronted Geese flew north-west over the sewage works, the second Crossness record. Further spring migrants were a Sand Martin on 29th and a Blackcap on 30th. Remarkably, a third Iceland Gull, a paler juvenile, was found off the Golf Centre on 31st and lingered until 18th April. All three Iceland Gulls had previously been seen at Rainham. The two long-staying Iceland Gulls attracted numerous birdwatchers from all over London and beyond over the next few weeks.

April: Raptors were prominent in the first few days of April. A female Marsh Harrier hunted over the nature reserve in the evening of 1st, while on 4th the patch's first ever Red Kite flew west along the Thames late morning, followed by a Common Buzzard south-east over the river at Belvedere in the afternoon. Two male Common Redstarts were seen on 6th, one by the Protected Area, the other in riverside scrub near the Golf Centre. The 11th was a particularly good day, with a female Black Redstart by the Crossness Engines, an Avocet off the Golf Centre, and single Arctic and Sandwich Terns west along the Thames. A female Cetti's Warbler was trapped and ringed on 13th, surprisingly only the second site record; a Tree Pipit was over the paddocks and another Sandwich Tern flew upriver the same day. The 18th saw another Sandwich Tern west, a pair of Common Scoters and a Black Tern east, and a singing Grasshopper Warbler and a Tree Pipit in riverside scrub by the Golf Centre. Another Arctic Tern was on the river on 19th. On 20th, the second Avocet for the month, a Greenshank, and yet another Sandwich Tern, were off the Golf Centre early morning. A first-summer Purple Heron flew in from the west at 08:25 on 25th, about an hour after departing from Walthamstow. It remained around the Nature Reserve until 14:00 on 27th, when it flew off east, attracting many visitors during its stay. Also on 25th, a Turtle Dove was on Southern Marsh. The morning of 26th saw a Bar-tailed Godwit fly east along the Thames and an Arctic Tern go west. The final good bird of a truly excellent month was a first-summer male Black Redstart singing by the lagoon.

May: The first Mediterranean Gull of the year, a first-winter, was seen on 2nd, with the first Hobby and Whinchat the following day. A Grey Plover was in Barking Bay on 13th, with a Sanderling off the Golf Centre on 14th. Two Kittiwakes (an adult and a first-summer) flew east along the Thames on 16th, followed by another adult the next day. Two Black Terns and two first-summer Mediterranean Gulls were on the river on 18th. Two Bar-tailed Godwits were seen on 25th, along with another Black Tern. A summer-plumaged Knot was off the Golf Centre on 30th. The final day of the month produced three Mediterranean Gulls (two adults and a first-summer) and an adult female Ruddy Shelduck, which sparked some debate over its origin and attracted a trickle of optimistic observers until 29th June.

June: A Little Ringed Plover with Ringed Plovers in Barking Bay on 6th was one of only two records all year, a worrying state of affairs for a species which has bred on the patch in several recent years. On 7th, eight Sanderlings were in Barking Bay. A Common Buzzard flew north-west over the river at Belvedere on 13th. A Hobby on 27th was only the second of the year; this is another species which had a particularly poor showing on the patch



This Knot Calidris canutus is breaking its long southward migration on the Thames in September. Riverside marshes provide important feeding grounds. (Dave Morrison)

in 2009. A singing Grasshopper Warbler appeared on Southern Marsh on 29th, remaining until July 2nd; perhaps it was a failed breeder from somewhere near by.

July: A juvenile Common Redstart was trapped and ringed on 5th; such an early autumn date, and the full juvenile plumage, leads one to wonder how close to Crossness this bird hatched. Another Grasshopper Warbler, or the same bird relocated, was in the Protected Area on 8th - a remarkable third record in the year of a species for which there are few if any previous Crossness records. The first two juvenile Mediterranean Gulls of the autumn appeared on 11th, and one or two were seen regularly for the next few weeks. An unseasonal Water Rail was in the Protected Area on 17th, and a Bar-tailed Godwit was off the Golf Centre the next day. A juvenile Little Ringed Plover (the second and final record for the year) and an adult Turnstone were by the sewage outfall on 21st; the Turnstone remained until 28th. A Hobby flew west on 25th.

August: The female Ruddy Shelduck of unknown origin reappeared on 1st, having been absent for the whole of July, and remained until 30th. An adult Bar-tailed Godwit was on the foreshore on 2nd. Two Sandwich Terns flew east on 4th. Three Black Terns were on the river on 6th, with four the next day and up to four until 13th. A female Marsh Harrier hunted over the paddocks on 7th, landing in the reeds by the lagoon. A juvenile Pied Flycatcher, the second Crossness record, was trapped and ringed on 9th, along with five Garden Warblers. Three Greenshanks landed briefly on the foreshore on 12th before flying west. Two adult Sanderlings were off the Golf Centre on 13th, along with a juvenile male Garganey; the latter remained on the Thames with Common Teal until 22nd, and was the first at Crossness since 2006. Another Greenshank flew west on 17th. At least nine Black Terns flew west with a large flock of Common Terns on 23rd. On 29th, two female or juvenile Garganeys, perhaps including the bird from earlier in the month, were on the Great Breach Lagoon, where they remained until September 7th, and one was on the Thames on 9th.

September: An adult male Dartford Warbler was in weeds to the east of the lagoon on 3rd, remaining until 7th. Two Hobbys were over the nature reserve on 6th, the fourth and last record in a very poor year for this species. A Spotted Flycatcher was on the Ridgeway by Southmere Park on 11th, with two there the next day - the only records for the year. Easterly winds mid-month produced an adult Little Gull (the only one of the year) and a juvenile Kittiwake on 14th, a drake Common Scoter drifting downriver on 15th, and a Common Guillemot flying east on 17th. Two Knot were off the Golf Centre on 19th. A Common Redstart moved west through riverside scrub at Belvedere in the early morning of 21st. A female or juvenile Garganey was on the Great Breach Lagoon from 27th to 30th; the number of individuals making up this autumn's records could be anything from two to five. An adult female Bearded Tit was by the lagoon on 28th, along with a late Sedge Warbler; the Bearded Tit was the first since 2003.

October: A Common Buzzard flew east on 1st. A male Dartford Warbler, presumably the bird from September, was present in a tiny patch of weeds around the lagoon viewing-screen from 2nd to 11th, though it could be remarkably elusive. A Tree Pipit flew over the Thames at Belvedere on 5th. On 6th, an immature Gannet flew west along the Thames. Strong north-easterlies with rain suggested that more seabirds could appear on 7th, and sure enough a juvenile Sabine's Gull spent ten minutes by the power station outfall before flying off west at 15:00; it had been seen at Rainham about 20 minutes before it arrived at Crossness. A first-winter Mediterranean Gull, the last of the year, flew east the same afternoon. On 15th, a pair of Bearded Tits were by the lagoon and two Black Redstarts fed on a pile of soil in Norman Road Field. An adult male Merlin flew east over the nature reserve on 16th. The only Ring Ouzel of the year, a first-winter, was briefly in riverside scrub early morning on 17th. The same day, a Brent Goose was off the Golf Centre, and two Lesser Redpolls were among other finches on Southern Marsh. On 26th, a Common Buzzard was over the river at Belvedere, and eight Jackdaws, a record count for the site, flew south over the Golf Centre. A juvenile Grey Plover was off the Golf Centre on 27th, and four European Golden Plovers were on the foreshore at Belvedere on 29th. Surprisingly, these appear to be the first European Golden Plovers on the patch since 1999.

November: The first Caspian Gull for Crossness, a first-winter, was off the Golf Centre on 22nd and 29th. A Black Redstart was by the Incinerator on 30th.

December: A male Black Redstart was by the Thames at Belvedere on 5th. There was a Woodcock in the Protected Area on 18th, and it or another was seen on 27th, reflecting a large influx into Britain from Russia; more records would follow in January 2010. An immature drake Ruddy Duck was on the Thames on 23rd - this was the second site record and the first since 1993; given the success of the current cull, it may well be the last. Two male Ruff were off the Golf Centre on 27th to 28th, with one reappearing in the New Year. Single Common Buzzards were seen on 28th and 30th. An adult Little Gull flew west on 30th, with three more (two adults and a first-winter) west on 31st. Also on 31st, the Great Skua which had been off Rainham for a couple of days just strayed on to the patch at Belvedere, the first record for the site and a fine end to a superb year.

BIRD HIGHLIGHTS AT RSPB RAINHAM MARSHES

HOWARD VAUGHAN

January: The two Penduline Tits from 2008 stayed until the 14th and attracted a steady stream of visitors. The 1st saw two site rarities in the shape of a Coal Tit and a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker; the latter was only the second record for the site and was seen again on the 8th. Bearded Tits were seen most days with up to four present, while two different Dartford Warblers were seen on the 1st and 8th. At least two Blackcaps and six Common Chiffchaffs over-wintered, and a very pale Chiffchaff of one of the eastern races was also watched in the reedbed. Cetti's Warblers appeared to have survived the worst of the cold, and up to 30 Water Rails were on the trails circuit. The finch flocks around the Centre attracted good numbers of Goldfinches, Greenfinches and Chaffinches, along with Bramblings on the 18th and 30th and a final show from the 2008 Serin on 2nd. A Bullfinch (8th) was a good record. Water and Rock Pipits continued to be seen along the foreshore, and the six Corn Buntings were still around. Northern Lapwing slowly built back up to about 2,000, with up to 100 European Golden Plover, 15 Grey Plover (a new record on 10th), 25 Curlew, 3 Ruff, 500 Black-tailed Godwits, 1,200 Dunlin and 18 Ringed Plover making for a good wader spectacle. Small parties of Common Snipe and at least three Jack Snipe were found. Both Common and Green Sandpipers over-wintered. Gull numbers increased dramatically after the cold snap, with upwards of 20,000 in the area, and careful scrutiny revealed Caspian Gulls on ten dates and Mediterranean (Med) Gulls on five. The only large bird of prey was an immature male Marsh Harrier on 26th; a female Merlin was seen well on 22nd and 25th, and Peregrine Falcons were seen daily. Three Short-eared Owls quartered the west end.

February: The month started well with a flurry of Yellowhammer records and two riverside Corn Buntings. The two Penduline Tits reappeared on the 6th and were last seen on the 11th, while a pair of Bearded Tits made sporadic appearances. Gull-watching produced a flurry of Med Gulls, at least six Caspian Gulls and two Iceland Gulls. A female Smew on the 11th was a very rare visitor to the site, but no other unusual wildfowl came in with all the snow and easterly winds. There were more records of Penduline Tit. Up to 300 Black-tailed Godwits joined us at every high tide and 200 European Golden Plover spangled over the marsh. Common Snipe peaked at 150 in very wet conditions on the 22nd. There was some sign of other wader passage, with two Oystercatchers (17th), Greenshank and Knot (19th), Little Stint (21st) and three Avocet (25th). A pair of Blackcaps was seen daily on the fat balls, the wintering Common Chiffchaffs had even started to sing by the end of the month, and a Dartford Warbler was heard again on the 17th. A male Merlin was seen on several dates and, as usual, the Peregrine Falcons were active.

March: Another month of gulls, with diligent watching producing about five Caspian, at least three different immature Icelanders and two immature Glaucous from 12th-20th. An albino large gull caused some consternation on most days. Several Med Gulls and an adult Kittiwake (19th) and Little Gull (21st-22nd) added interest. A Bittern was seen in the foreshore reedbed on 17th and was the first for the reserve, while a male Mandarin Duck

on the 12th was the first for 19 years! A record 37 Curlew were seen on 30th, but there were few other waders - bar a single Avocet (3rd), two 'limosa' Black-tailed Godwits (18th), Jack Snipe (25th), three different Ruff, 140 European Golden Plover (last seen on 4th), and the first Little Ringed Plover on 13th with up to six on subsequent days. The male Dartford Warbler reappeared on 10th and 13th, and at least nine Cetti's Warblers were in song. A Bearded Tit was seen again on 22nd; and, amazingly, two Penduline Tits dropped in for a while on 29th. Water Pipit numbers increased, with at least eight on the Barges on 31st. Peregrine Falcon sightings became scarce as the local birds headed back to their nest sites; but there were still raptors to be had, with a Merlin (16th), Red Kite (19th), Marsh Harrier (male on 4th) and at least seven Common Buzzards through. A Brent Goose was seen on 4th and 5th, and three White-fronted Geese flew through on 29th. A few Siskin headed north and a female Brambling entertained us around the feeders from 24th. Summer migrants were scarce, but the first Swallow was amazingly early on 8th, followed by Sand Martin and Northern Wheatear on 14th. Several Common Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps were in song most days, and the month ended well with a singing Firecrest and a Site rarity - a Red-legged Partridge!

April: A typically bustling April with most of the commoner summer migrants making an appearance before the end of the month. Scarcer visitors included a Common Redstart (8th), Blue-headed Wagtail (27th), Garden Warbler (23rd), Tree Pipit (28th), Ring Ouzel (10th, 12th and 19th) and at least three Grasshopper Warblers. Raptor passage over the reserve was fantastic, with nearing 20 Common Buzzards, four Marsh Harriers, three Red Kites (4th and two on 18th), two Ospreys (16th and 18th), the first Hobby on the 14th, female Merlin (11th and 17th), as well as Peregrine Falcon, Sparrowhawk and Kestrel. Terns were scarce, but a few Common were seen, along with three Arctic (19th) and a single Black (29th); and Little Gulls were seen on three dates including eight on the 6th. Twenty-two Common Scoters spent the day on the Thames on the 11th, with six more on 17th. Wader passage was relatively slow, with 28 European Golden Plover north on 10th, four Grey Plover (16th), Knot (11th), two Avocet (2nd), 23 Whimbrel (9th), and up to five Greenshank, four Bar-tailed Godwits and 20 Black-tailed Godwits (18th). Two pairs of Garganey were found on 6th, with a pair reappearing on 8th and a male staying throughout. Vestiges of winter included several Siskins, a Brambling and the Iceland Gull (until 16th). A Great White Egret flew through on 14th and a Spoonbill dropped in on 28th.

May: The focus of the whole month was the 13th when, at long last, we were treated to some real wader passage. During the course of the day, 15 species were seen, including record-breaking flocks of 26 Sanderling, 21 Grey Plover and seven Turnstone, along with 12 Bar-tailed Godwits, 26 Ringed Plover and two Whimbrel. On the river, 16 Black, 11 Arctic and two Little Terns made for a special day. Two Sandwich Terns were seen over the next four days, and Curlew Sandpipers on 14th-15th and 31st added spice. Other waders logged were 16 limosa-race Black-tailed Godwits (11th) and four Avocets (14th). A Red Kite (4th) and several Common Buzzards moved through, while a female Marsh Harrier was seen on three dates. Three Spoonbills dropped in for a while on 6th, with a single immature seen on 7th, 11th and 12th. Little Gulls were seen on 4th and from 12th-14th, and a Caspian (13th) and a couple of Med Gulls were reported. A single Spotted Flycatcher was in the woodland on several dates from 13th, and seven Whinchats was

exceptional for the spring. The Dartford Warbler was seen again on 13th-14th, and a Turtle Dove (7th) was the only record.

June: There was a trickle of waders during the month, with Wood Sandpiper and Knot through on 1st, Whimbrels on 3rd and 24th, Greenshank from 5th with up to five on 26th, 26 Black-tailed Godwits on 22nd, Ruff (26th), four Avocets (12th) and Grey Plover (28th)... not bad for what is normally a quiet wader month! A Spotted Flycatcher hung around until 2nd, but there were no other passerines of note until 27th, when both Grey and Yellow Wagtails were seen. Two adult Med Gulls were seen regularly, and four Little and two Common Gulls were seen on 26th. The first Yellow-legged Gulls were back on the river from 18th. The male Eurasian Wigeon and four Common Teal were still around, and the Ruddy Shelduck from Barking Bay made distant appearances on 1st and 16th. Up to six Hobbys made daily appearances, and nine Common Buzzards through on 14th was exceptional for June. A female Marsh Harrier was around until 5th, with an immature male present from 26th.

July: A steady passage of waders during the month, with up to six Whimbrel daily; Common Sandpipers reached 12 by month end. Two Sanderling and 13 Dunlin on 15th were noteworthy, and Little Egrets peaked at 26 on 3rd. Three broods of Shoveler and Tufted Duck and two of Gadwall made for the best season in many years. Common Gulls moved up river in the first week, and at least six different Med Gulls were logged along with over 20 different Yellow-legged Gulls. A Tawny Owl was heard on 3rd, and the first juvenile Marsh Harrier of the season was seen on 30th-31st. A Spotted Flycatcher was seen on 20th, and a Tree Pipit on 31st was the first real passage migrant.

August: Although not especially hot, it was another dry month; and on warm days there was often a Marsh Harrier to be seen, with juveniles on 15 dates and two on 22nd. Common Buzzards drifted over on 19th and 23rd, with four together on 22nd. A Honey Buzzard moved south on 23rd, and our third Red Kite of the year was seen on 7th. However, the star raptor was a male Montagu's Harrier that quartered the fields on 24th-25th. Water Rails showed amazingly well for such a skulking species, and three Egyptian Geese (24th) were new for the year. Waders were a little thin on the ground, but Icelandic Black-tailed Godwits, Green Sandpipers and Common Snipe performed very well in front of the hide. A Spotted Redshank (26th), two Turnstone (6th), 11 Whimbrel, (6th), Ruff (11th), and Sanderling (25th) were notable. Migrant small birds were definitely on the move, with up to eight Whinchat (17th), Tree Sparrow and Tree Pipit (25th), several Spotted Flycatchers, Pied Flycatcher (29th), Common Redstart (6th and 11th) and two Common Crossbills (3rd).

September: It was a month for raptors, with sustained sky-watching producing some excellent records, including: at least 22 Common Buzzards, 11 Marsh Harriers, Hen Harrier (27th), and many sightings of Sparrowhawk, Hobby, Kestrel and Peregrine Falcon. News of the Tufted Puffin had everyone glued to the Thames; and the day after (17th), a Common Guillemot was found - only to be topped by an even rarer Puffin on the 23rd. A Black-necked Grebe on the river on 21st was most unexpected, and the first returning Great-crested Grebes were seen in the last week. Tern passage was almost non-existent, with 51 Common, four Arctic and a Black on 14th being the only notable count. A male Common Scoter, three Little Gulls and two Sandwich Terns were seen the following day.

Duck started to dribble back in, with up to five Pintail, but there was no major influx. Waders were similarly scarce, with a Little Stint on 17th-18th being the highlight, along with a Spotted Redshank (12th) and two Knot from 15th. The woodland held Spotted Flycatchers on several dates, and a Pied Flycatcher was found on 1st. Whinchat passage was prominent, with peaks of 13 on 2nd and ten on 8th, while good numbers of Yellow Wagtails and Meadow Pipits moved through. Amongst them were the first Rock Pipits and three Tree Pipits. Six Tree Sparrows around the feeders were something of a surprise (8th), and a Turtle Dove on 11th proved to be the only bird of the autumn.

October: The raptor fest of September continued into October: over 20 Common Buzzards in addition to two daily-visiting birds; and four Marsh Harriers on the 4th and another on 12th. A female Merlin made several visits from 3rd onwards, and Peregrine Falcons became a daily spectacle. River-watching produced further rewards, with a fine juvenile Sabine's Gull on 7th. Late terns included Arctic and Sandwich on 9th and a Common on 14th. Yellow-legged Gulls peaked at 23 on 9th, and at least five different Caspian Gulls were logged from 22nd. Two Little Gulls were seen on 31st. There was a little flurry of Brent Goose sightings, with five on 10th and four on 14th. A single Pinkfoot was seen on the 10th, while the river also hosted two Common Scoter (14th) and Common Goldeneye on 15th and 28th. A Spotted Crake was seen on the 27th-28th, and the same pool also held two Jack Snipe. There were some notable passerines, including a late Tree Pipit on 12th and 13th. Woodlarks were seen on 2nd and 10th; and, as finch numbers increased, there were sightings of six Lesser Redpolls (12th), Brambling (14th and 18th) and 13 Common Crossbills (21st). A Black Redstart was found on 17th, and Ring Ouzels dropped in on four dates from 4th. The first Redwings were present on 12th. A Lapland Bunting rounded off the month nicely on 30th.

*Rainham Marshes RSPB is usually the most reliable site in London for Bearded Tits *Panurus biarmicus* in autumn and winter. This fine male feeding on seeds on the boardwalk there was a welcome find on Boxing Day. (Paul Hawkins)*



November: With water now evident on the site, the number of duck rose steadily, and there were about 400 Eurasian Wigeon by mid-month along with 600 Common Teal and 11 Pintail. There were still raptors to be had, with Hen Harriers on 11th and 15th, and a male Marsh Harrier that stayed from 16th - most unusual. A female Merlin was seen on three dates, and Peregrine Falcons became a daily sight. Northern Lapwing slowly rose to about 1,000, European Golden Plover peaked at 194 on 20th, and 280 Black-tailed Godwits roosted on 16th. A single Avocet was seen on 11th, and Dunlin numbers peaked at 700 on the foreshore from 10th. Two Jack Snipe were to be found - by the patient - at the Crake Pool. Short-eared and Barn Owls were seen on several dates, and a Little Owl on 7th was the first for at least ten years. Yellow-legged Gulls peaked at 14 (12th), and Caspian Gulls were seen on three dates. There was quite a lot of small bird action, with Yellowhammers on three dates, four Corn Buntings, and a very obliging Snow Bunting (9th). Fourteen Cetti's Warblers were in song, and a Dartford Warbler was seen on 25th and 29th. Two Bearded Tits were seen on 1st and, amongst the growing finch flock, a single Twite was seen on four dates from 11th.

December: A very good mix of species on the reserve, with the continued presence of the male Marsh Harrier and the arrival of two females from 23rd. They seemed quite tolerant of each other, so who knows... A Common Buzzard was daily on the Silt Lagoons, a female Merlin was seen on 11th and 28th, and at least six Peregrine Falcons were using the site. A ringtail Hen Harrier (14th) was all too brief. Gull-watching produced at least five Caspian Gulls. A Great Skua was a great find on 29th and was still terrorising birds on 31st; and Little Gulls were seen on each of these days, with counts of six, 17 and eight. A single Kittiwake was also tagging along. An unseasonal Spoonbill dropped in on 22nd. Northern Lapwing numbers remained stable at about 1,000, with about 150 European Golden Plover, many Common Snipe and three Ruff amongst them. Black-tailed Godwits were seen mainly at the Barges, but one on the reserve on 27th was a colour-ringed Icelandic bird that we saw here in January. Other notable waders included Bar-tailed Godwit and Turnstone (29th), three Avocet (18th), single Jack Snipe and three Woodcock (21st), and eight Grey Plover (from 18th). A pair of Bearded Tits showed very well from 19th. Single Bramblings were noted, and Bullfinch on 21st was a good find. A couple of Yellowhammers were also seen. Cold weather brought in 400 Fieldfare on 26th, and 238 Skylarks were seen heading north on 18th.

Howard Vaughan - Information Officer, RSPB Rainham Marshes
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Editorial note: There were other reports of Kumlien's Gull, Goshawks, Tundra Bean Goose, Honey Buzzards, Montagu's Harrier, Gannet, Red-throated Pipit, Yellow-browed Warbler, Lapland Bunting, Serin and Snow Bunting, but to date no details of these have been received by our Rarities Committee. A report of a Glaucous-winged Gull and of an 'Atlantic' Yellow-legged Gull are still being considered by the BBRC. A report of an Eleonora's Falcon was not accepted by the BBRC. (See Appendix III for details of all these records.)

BIRD HIGHLIGHTS AT REGENT'S PARK

TONY DUCKETT

As one year ends and another begins, we look forward with excitement to the next 12 months, hoping for plenty of birds and - with luck - a new species for the Park. In reviewing the year, with a very respectable total of 123 species recorded, one would have expected us to be over the moon; in some ways we were. The disappointing aspect was the very low numbers of our regular visitors. This downward trend has been happening for many years, but seems to have increased in recent years. The colder, wetter springs that we are now encountering will have caused nests to be washed out and chicks to starve due to lack of invertebrates in this critical period. It makes one wonder what the years ahead will bring. Will it be an increase in scavengers and alien species? These seem to be the ones that, at present, are adapting to today's problems more quickly - though it would be nice to see more Red Kites in the London Area.

January: It was relatively quiet and wet for long periods. The Water Rails could be relied on to put in an appearance, though it meant waiting a while on occasions; they preferred those rare sunny days. Thirteen Northern Lapwings flew NE on 7th, and ducks on the lake included three Common Teal and 40 Mandarin Ducks (not collection birds). Fourteen Siskins were feeding on Silver Birch seeds throughout the month. A Little Owl was found roosting in either a nest box in the goose pen or in a nearby hollow tree; was it an adult or one of their youngsters from last year?

February: Up to 55 Fieldfares and at least 76 Redwings were present at the beginning of the month. It is extremely unusual for the former to be present other than in single figures, and then only for a day at the most. Going on tail length and undertail covert colouration, there were three Water Rails present on the 8th. A pair of Peregrine Falcons was also seen overhead on that date. A redhead Smew turned up on 25th, the first since 1963. Two Blackcaps were on the feeders in the cricket pen from 28th.

March: A Rook - our scarcest corvid - flew south 2nd. Four Tawny Owlets emerged over two days from the 8th; unfortunately, one was soon killed by Magpies. A Common Chiffchaff was singing on the 11th, more than likely a bird that had been over-wintering in the UK. Jackdaws were seen on several days, with a maximum of six on 16th. The owlets were down to two by the 21st. A Woodcock flew across the open spaces 23rd. The first Common Buzzard of the year flew west 24th, a day when three Common Chiffchaffs were singing. A very unusual record concerned a pair of Great Black-backed Gulls displaying on the rowing boats on the lake 25th; they began nest-building on the island where the Herring Gulls breed 26th, however they didn't return the following day.

April: The Smew was last seen on the 3rd. A Hawfinch flew south, and two Willow Warblers and the second Woodcock of the year were present on 5th, another Woodcock was in the Leaf Yard 6th, and seven House Martins flew north 7th. A male Firecrest sang from within the grounds of the Holme 10th. The 13th saw Common Buzzard, Red Kite, two Peregrine Falcons and four Sparrowhawks fly over. While I was scanning the lake early morning on

the 14th, a very vocal Oystercatcher flew low over the water; later in the day, the first Northern Wheatear was present on the open spaces. A Ringed Plover, a very scarce wader for the Park, flew west in heavy rain 16th, the same day that the first two Swallows of the year were feeding over the lake. The 21st saw two Red Kites and two Common Buzzards late afternoon, one female Common Redstart was seen briefly by one observer 22nd, and an Osprey drifted south-east 26th. The 27th saw a superb male Garganey turn up, having been seen in Hyde Park the previous day; this bird was to remain throughout the summer. A female Ring Ouzel made a pit stop 28th, and Common Tern and Reed Warblers were present from 30th.

May: The first Common Swifts arrived on 2nd along with a Lesser Whitethroat, and another Red Kite flew east and two Wheatears of the Greenland race were on the open spaces 3rd. A Wood Warbler put in an all-too-brief appearance in trees bordering the Holme on the 5th, and a Sedge Warbler was singing in the Heather Gardens. The Kestrels were feeding their young in the Wetland Pen 9th. A Turtle Dove, a really scarce visitor, flew west 10th. A Common Sandpiper was around the lake and two Arctic Terns flew through 14th. An unseasonal Siskin flew through 20th, and what was thought to be a young Little Owl was heard 29th.

June: Another couple of unseasonal visitors were a Kingfisher in the Wetland Pen 25th, and a male Common Whitethroat near by.

July: A Common Whitethroat seemed to be holding territory on 3rd and 4th on Primrose Hill, but wasn't heard or seen after that. Two juvenile Northern Lapwings were found on the grass by the Bandstand 30th and were very tolerant of the public, remaining until late afternoon. Six Curlews were also seen on that afternoon, as well as the first of the UK's dispersing Willow Warblers. The following day, 31st, witnessed the arrival of a good number of warblers, including Common Whitethroats, Blackcaps, Common Chiffchaffs, and Willow and Garden Warblers. Normally these species in such numbers do not arrive until the second half of August.

August: Three Common Crossbills were possibly disturbed from trees 2nd, and Common Sandpiper and Nuthatch were present 9th. The only Pied Flycatcher of the year was seen 10th. Common Buzzard and Hobby were high over the Rose Gardens 12th. A Treecreeper was roaming with the tit flock 16th, the first sighting for several years. Always harder to see during the autumn were two Sedge Warblers 21st in a tree by Long Bridge. A first-winter male Common Redstart was in the grounds of the old Golf and Tennis school 21st. Though not seen, Sandwich Terns were heard flying over early in the morning 26th heading southwards, following a report of a small group flying in the same direction over Brent Reservoir (5km to the north) five minutes earlier. This was also the day that the drake Garganey was last seen.

September: The last Common Swift passed through on 7th. Although autumn sky-watching in this period was not as productive as in previous years, we were still picking up Common Buzzards, Hobbys, Peregrine Falcons and Sparrowhawks. Two Whinchats were on the ropes protecting the cricket squares 10th, and another was present briefly on 18th - a day when two Woodlarks contemplated landing but thought better of it. On the 20th, five species of raptor were recorded, including a single Red Kite. Sightings, as usual,

then began to tail off as we awaited the last dates for hirundines and the first dates for winter thrushes.

October: The first of last year's over-wintering Water Rails returned 8th, with a second bird present the following day. This was also the day that the first Redwing flew through. The sight and sound of two Skylarks 11th always reminds me of larger-scale movements of the past. The last Swallow flew through 12th, and four Common Teal were feeding in the Wetland Pen. The number of Redwings (312) and Song Thrushes (14) passing through began to increase from the 13th, and the first Fieldfare headed west 14th. Another memorable day, the 17th, saw Firecrest, Rock Pipit, Ring Ouzel and the third Woodlark of the year, as well as good numbers of other passage migrants. To the lucky few on a late-season bird walk on 18th, a Ring Ouzel was flushed from the Wetland Pen. The second Rock Pipit of the autumn flew west 21st. Six Lesser Redpolls were feeding on silver birch seeds on the 29th and were seen off and on for the next few days.

November: Three Water Rails were present on the 3rd - two in the rail ditch and another in a reedbed in the wetland. A female Firecrest flew from the Holme into the grounds of the Open Air Theatre 4th. A Woodcock flew into the Community Wildlife Garden early morning on the 5th. A first-winter Mediterranean Gull was on the Lake from the 6th; this bird would commute between here and St James's Park. Yet another Ring Ouzel was seen 10th, making this one of the best autumns for this shy, mountain-breeding species. The Mediterranean Gull was last seen on 21st, by which time it had become very approachable.

December: A Common Chiffchaff was present on 3rd; it is surprising that we do not have more records of this species during the winter months. Mandarin Duck numbers began to increase this month, with 56 on the lake 9th. Winter began to set in from 18th with a light dusting of snow that morning, which resulted in ten Northern Lapwings flying over. The following day, a further 11 birds flew east; Redwings and the odd Fieldfare were now turning up in the Park. Two Woodcocks were flushed on 20th from two different areas on the western side of the Park. Meadow Pipits are rarely seen at this time of year, so one on 22nd and two 23rd feeding on the ground were very unseasonal.

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Editorial note: A report of a Montagu's Harrier was not accepted by the Rarities Committee. There was a report of Honey Buzzard, but to date no details of this have been received by our Rarities Committee. (See Appendix III for details of all these records.)

BIRD HIGHLIGHTS AT STAINES RESERVOIRS

ROB INNES

Though water-levels were just as high as last year, for some reason Staines was back on form in 2009, with several local rarities and scarcities to enjoy. Many flew straight over or showed only to the small group of keen regulars; but in general, winter, passage, and even mid-summer, had plenty to offer visitors to the causeway.

January: The year got underway with a good record of eight Rooks on 1st, a Water Pipit on the same date, and a Great Northern Diver lingering from last year, from 1st-3rd. A Scaup appeared on 17th and was joined by a second on 31st. The only Red-breasted Merganser of the year was present on 19th. Smew, by contrast, appeared on seven dates, with a maximum of six on 6th. An *Aythya* hybrid was seen on 17th-18th with the Pochard flock, which peaked at 457 on 7th. Waders were represented by a Curlew on 10th and a Common Sandpiper on many dates. A Little Egret flew W on 19th and a Short-eared Owl on 26th. A Common Chiffchaff was seen regularly in bushes by the causeway.

February: Gulls were on the move, including two early Little Gulls (15th) and an adult Caspian (22nd). Black-necked Grebes were around on many dates and built up to nine at the end of the month, and Scaup were also seen almost daily, with up to four present. A Great Northern Diver visited three times, and there were several Smew mid-month. First appearances for migrant waders were Golden Plover (14th), Ringed Plover (16th), Dunlin (three, 21st) and Oystercatcher (25th), while single Green and Common Sandpipers were also recorded. A Kingfisher added colour on 7th.

March: Several early migrant waders were present, notably Avocet (1st), Curlew (14th), Black-tailed Godwit (two on 21st), Knot (singles on 23rd and 27th), Oystercatcher (23rd) and Little Ringed Plover (singles on 28th and 30th). Single Little Gulls were seen on several dates and there was also a small early influx of ten on 20th. Other returning summer visitors were Sand Martin (from 14th), Northern Wheatear (from 15th), and House Martin and Swallow (28th). Three White Wagtails also passed through, and there were several sightings of Water Pipit. One or two Great Northern Divers were seen on several dates from mid-month, while Scaup were recorded almost daily, with four until 8th and then two until the month's end. Smew dropped in several times, with a maximum of eight on 2nd, and up to 60 Common Goldeneye were counted.

April: As usual an absorbing month, there was plenty of variety, and quality too. A group of five Velvet Scoters on 13th (Easter Monday) attracted plenty of admirers. Other goodies were a fly-over Iceland Gull on 16th and a northward-flapping Purple Heron on 26th, enjoyed by one and three observers respectively. Otherwise, newly arrived birds mingled with long-stayers throughout. Migrants included Sandwich Tern (two on 10th), Kittiwake (11th), Arctic Terns (from 11th, peaking at 25 on 19th), Oystercatcher (11th and 21st), Short-eared Owl on 13th, Knot (16th), Turnstone (17th), Curlew on three dates and several Whimbrel from 17th, Greenshank (26th), Bar-tailed Godwit (one on 24th and two next day), Little Tern (four on 24th and 30th) and Osprey (25th). Little Gulls charmed observers

throughout, and influxes brought up to 23 on 6th and up to 51 during 16th-20th. Several Mediterranean Gulls were also seen. First dates for other summer visitors were Common Tern (4th), Yellow Wagtail (7th), Common Sandpiper (10th) and Common Swift (in with a bang on 25th). Black-necked Grebes lingered until 17th, four Common Scoter made an unusual stay from 17th-20th, and a Great Northern Diver remained until 22nd (there were two on 4th). The two Scaup were last seen on 2nd.

May: The clear highlight was a fine White-winged Black Tern, swept in by a powerful easterly airstream to entertain observers from 11th-13th. There was a brief influx of Black Terns on the last date, too, with up to 24 present. Arctic Terns were identified on nine dates and Little Terns on 9th (two) and 14th (one). Far less expected were the two sightings of presumably the same over-flying Iceland Gull on 12th and 16th. An unusual mini-arrival of Kittiwakes featured five birds during 5th-6th. Among migrant waders were Bar-tailed Godwits (two on 2nd and a late single on 23rd), Greenshank (10th), Turnstones (three on 10th and one on 13th), a Sanderling (13th), six Avocets on 15th, and several Oystercatchers and Whimbrel. A late Great Northern Diver appeared on 10th, while other notables were Marsh Harrier (11th) and several Mediterranean Gulls.

June: Contrasting fortunes on the breeding rafts: Black-headed Gulls increased to some 160 pairs and excluded Common Terns so successfully that no tern young were raised - a worrying development. Two pairs of Shelduck fledged broods. Unusually, the month was quite good for oddities. Migration brought four Black Terns in the first week, Little Gull on 4th, Little Tern on 6th, two Oystercatchers on 6th and singles on 8th and 14th, a Kittiwake on 12th, Sandwich Tern on 27th, and Curlew on 28th and 29th. Two drake Scaup were around from mid-month, and two Eurasian Wigeon also lingered. A Common Goldeneye was seen on 24th, there were Mediterranean Gulls on five dates, and several Black-necked Grebes were recorded. Common Sandpipers returned from 27th, and there was an early Greenshank on 28th.

July: Rather a quiet month, though a Scaup remained until 11th. It was an excellent period for Mediterranean Gulls, with up to three on 12 dates. The 8th brought a large, early movement of Black-tailed Godwits, with flocks of 21 and 28 visiting, and up to five were seen on five other dates. On 29th, a flock of 25 Whimbrel flew through, and more typical records of one to three came on five other dates. Several Curlews were noted, two or three Oystercatchers dropped in, and two male Ruff were welcome on 17th. On the same date, a Knot appeared and next day a second bird joined it, then two Sanderling turned up on 19th followed by one on 25th. Turnstone passed through on six dates, with a maximum of five on 28th. Other migrants were Black Tern (18th), Little Gull (28th-29th) and Arctic Tern (30th). Two Black-necked Grebes were around on 10th and a Common Goldeneye on 2nd, and Red Kites were noted on 27th (two) and 29th. Good numbers of Sand Martins passed through, with up to 350 mid-month.

August: Top bird was, remarkably, the year's second White-winged Black Tern - a sub-adult, present nearly all day on 7th. Secondary highlights were a fly-through Marsh Harrier on 2nd and an adult Curlew Sandpiper on 5th. Otherwise, wader passage brought a flock of 20 Whimbrel on 4th, five Ruff on 9th and one on 15th, up to seven Black-tailed Godwits and single Oystercatchers each on three dates, Turnstones on four dates (max. three on 10th), up to seven Greenshank, Knot on 23rd and Sanderling on 29th. Black Terns peaked

at 24 on 24th and then another influx brought 25-30 on 25th, and a Sandwich Tern was seen on 29th. At least three juvenile Mediterranean Gulls were recorded, but only one Little Gull. Other 'notebook birds' were ones and twos of Black-necked Grebe and a Common Scoter (1st-9th).

September: More quality in the shape of a Leach's Petrel was enjoyed by many observers on the final day of the month. The supporting cast included Common Scoter (16th), Knot (singles on 10th and 16th), two Mediterranean Gulls (10th and 25th) and Ruff (four on 16th). More expected were Black-necked Grebes on several dates, Greenshank on four dates, up to four Little Gulls, several Sanderling, five Oystercatchers on 5th, Black Tern on 13th, Rock Pipits on 19th and 28th, and Whimbrel on 20th. A late Common Swift flew S on 18th, and European Stonechat, Whinchat, Northern Wheatear and Yellow Wagtail all put in appearances.

October: Top rarity was the juvenile Gannet that flew over on the morning of 6th during a circuit of London's far west. Apart from that, it was pretty quiet. Birds of note were Red-necked Grebe on 4th, Rock Pipit on 5th, one or two Black-necked Grebes most of the month, two Lesser Redpolls on 13th and Mediterranean Gull on 25th.

November: A Great Northern Diver (almost expected these winters) remained from 20th-25th, with a second present on 21st, and two Scaup appeared at the month's end. A Short-eared Owl was a good record on 18th. Other oddities comprised Black-necked Grebes (one or two most of the month) and Golden Plover (20th).

December: Rarely a month for surprises, but this year a Marsh Harrier on 13th was out of the ordinary. The rest of the story concerned wildfowl and a few minor scarcities: three Common Scoter (1st), Scaup (four individuals at various times), Little Gull (15th), Smew (19th and 24th), two Golden Plover and two Water Pipits (23rd), and a Pintail and four Goosander (27th).

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Editorial note: There was a report of a second Leach's Storm-petrel, but to date no details of this have been received by our Rarities Committee. (See Appendix III for details of this record.)

BIRD HIGHLIGHTS AT STOKE NEWINGTON RESERVOIRS

MARK PEARSON

January: A stray waif discovered at the end of 2008, the Siberian Chiffchaff (which should have been in India as opposed to along the frozen margin of a small Hackney waterbody) remained in view until the 6th, entertaining visitors and even featuring in national media. Otherwise, the regular winter visitors included Water Rails and Kingfishers, but a Jack Snipe on the 10th was unexpected.

February: Snow and plunging temperatures at the beginning of the month triggered good movements of winter thrushes but little else, until the 4th; desperate prayers for the juvenile Great Northern Diver, only 2km away on East Warwick Reservoir, to relocate on to our even less likely inner-city pond were (almost unbelievably) answered on the 4th, when the bird began a 12-day residence. The first of its kind and a faintly absurd sight in such a location, the diver nonetheless took full advantage of both reservoirs' healthy fish stocks before leaving on the 15th. A Common Buzzard on the 27th was the first February record.

March: Quieter, but still productive. A Woodcock flushed on the 11th was the year's only record, Peregrine Falcons became an almost daily fixture, several Common Buzzards graced sky-watches, up to three Water Rails were still in the reedbed, six Sand Martins on the 14th (the same date as last year) were the first trans-Saharan to return, and a Swallow on the 23rd was the earliest ever. More prayers were answered (albeit on an all-too-temporary basis) as the month ended with a sudden drop in water-levels on the East Res; the 31st immediately attracted a Redshank, the first modern record here.

April: Common Snipe, Redshank, Northern Lapwing and the first Little Ringed Plover in several years opened the month, before the mud sadly disappeared below water-level. If the same was repeated during May or August... The month proved to be easily the best April ever here. An Osprey glided over on the 1st, and the 6th produced two new birds for the site - a Short-eared Owl and an adult Little Gull. Our earliest ever Common Swift hawked over the East Res on the 10th, and an Arctic Tern (only the second site record) followed suit on the 12th. The 13th was one of those days which is hard to forget in any context (let alone on a small urban patch). It began with the bizarre sight of a Red-legged Partridge (the first, and probably last, site record) using Mute Swans for cover on the East Res bank, continued with a stunning Water Pipit in almost the same spot (another site first), and ended with a prolonged sky-watch which produced an unforgettable Black Kite in the afternoon sunshine. Conditions (and opportunities) for raptor-watching were excellent, and as well as the above, the month yielded double figures of Common Buzzards, seven Red Kites, a Marsh Harrier on the 15th, and an early Hobby on the 29th.

May: The rich vein continued, with the second star, spring, overshoot arriving with a weather front and a sudden influx of Common Swifts on the evening of the 9th - a Red-rumped Swallow, for a memorable 35 minutes, rivalled the kite for bird of the decade

within weeks. Common migrants moved through as expected, while scarcer records included a Ruddy Shelduck (10th), a Greenshank (15th), another Red Kite (4th), a couple more Common Buzzards and several Hobbys.

June, July and August: These far less eventful months were almost welcome after the preceding action. Hobbys became increasingly omnipresent, with up to three simultaneously, two Common Crossbills flew low and south on July 2nd, and a few Spotted Flycatchers were the highlight of a relatively poor August migration.

September: It was back into the fray; good numbers of commoner migrants (warblers, hirundines etc.) in the first half of the month were overshadowed by a run of local scarcities in the second half - the 16th alone producing a juvenile Black Tern (the first site record, at last), a Common Redstart and a Pied Flycatcher, followed by a Raven over on the 22nd (another first) and two Firecrests on the same day, and the year's second Marsh Harrier low around the East Res on the 24th.

October: Despite far less coverage, it was hardly any less inspiring. The reservoirs' first ever Bittern flew low and south-west at dusk on the 28th, a male Ring Ouzel fed on the banks on the 19th, another Firecrest visited briefly on the 13th, and two Common Scoters spent the 21st and 22nd here (the first in many decades).

November: A male Merlin flew low and south on the 11th; the same day, a Cetti's Warbler appeared in the reedbed - only the second record for the site - and remained into 2010. Wildfowl included at least four Red-crested Pochards, several Eurasian Wigeon and Common Teal, and the first two in a series of interesting hybrid Aythyas - one a female Greater Scaup x Tufted Duck, and the other a male Ring-necked Duck x Tufted Duck (the latter resembling its rarer ancestor from any distance).

December: Another extended period of harsh wintry conditions set in mid-month and worsened towards the end of the year. The highlights of this period were in quantity rather than quality, with impressive diurnal movements of classic winter species; the 23rd alone saw a minimum of 1,800 Redwings move through and over, as well as 650 Fieldfares, and the first site record of Golden Plover, with c.80 heading low and south. A further three Jack Snipe were recorded during the month.

In 2009 the reservoirs received year-round, intensive coverage, approaching 300 days and thousands of hours in total, and the year's highlights reflect the fortunate position in which I have found myself in recent times.

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For the complete reservoirs' avifauna, please visit <http://snrbirds.org.uk>

CHECKLIST OF BIRDS OF THE LONDON AREA AND GUIDE FOR CONTRIBUTORS OF ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS

With the addition of Brown Shrike in 2009, the total number of species recorded in an apparently wild state in the London Area in historic times is now 363, of which 350 have been recorded since 1900. We are no longer including the EURING species number in this list, as the order we use here no longer corresponds with the EURING order.

The 13 species marked with a * in the checklist were recorded in the London Area at least once prior to 1900 but have not been recorded in an apparently wild state since.

All records of ornithological interest, from LNHS members and non-members alike, are welcomed by the Society's Ornithological Records Committee. However, with an ever-growing number of active birdwatchers in the London Area it seems sensible to issue a guide to our requirements.

This guide is not intended to be comprehensive and contributors are asked to use their own guidance and common sense but it does serve as a reference point for the type of records required. For example, with many common breeding species comparative yearly breeding counts are especially welcomed. The Records Committee reserves the right to request full details for any record, eg out-of-season migrants. This guide does not apply to Inner London where all records are required, but similar criteria regarding descriptions should be followed.

Key:

- A = all records.
- B = all breeding records.
- BBRC = full description required (form available from recorders). *British Birds* Rarities Committee makes the decision.
- D = full description required (form available from recorders).
- F&L = first and last dates for any site.
- MM = dated monthly maximum counts.
- N = brief notes required (how identified, view, distance etc., form available from recorders).
- NR = all records from sites where bird not seen regularly.
- P = passage movements.
- S = all records between mid-May and mid-July.
- ST = annual statement of status at a site.
- T = all territory counts.
- W = records outside breeding season.

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|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Mute Swan | <i>Cygnus olor</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Bewick's Swan | <i>Cygnus columbianus</i> | A, N |
| Whooper Swan | <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> | A, N |
| Bean Goose | <i>Anser fabalis</i> | A, D |
| Pink-footed Goose | <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> | A, D |

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| White-fronted Goose | <i>Anser albifrons</i> | A |
| Greylag Goose | <i>Anser anser</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Red-breasted Goose* | <i>Branta ruficollis</i> | BBRC |
| Brent Goose | <i>Branta bernicla</i> | A |
| Barnacle Goose | <i>Branta leucopsis</i> | A, N |
| Canada Goose | <i>Branta canadensis</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Egyptian Goose | <i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i> | A |
| Shelduck | <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> | MM, NR, B, S |
| Mandarin Duck | <i>Aix galericulata</i> | A |
| Eurasian Wigeon | <i>Anas penelope</i> | A |
| American Wigeon | <i>Anas americana</i> | A, D |
| Gadwall | <i>Anas strepera</i> | MM, NR, S, B |
| Common Teal | <i>Anas crecca</i> | MM, NR, S, B |
| Green-winged Teal | <i>Anas carolinensis</i> | A, D |
| Mallard | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Pintail | <i>Anas acuta</i> | A |
| Garganey | <i>Anas querquedula</i> | A |
| Blue-winged Teal | <i>Anas discors</i> | BBRC |
| Shoveler | <i>Anas clypeata</i> | MM, NR, S, B |
| Red-crested Pochard | <i>Netta rufina</i> | A |
| Common Pochard | <i>Aythya ferina</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Ring-necked Duck | <i>Aythya collaris</i> | A, D |
| Ferruginous Duck | <i>Aythya nyroca</i> | A, D |
| Tufted Duck | <i>Aythya fuligula</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Scaup | <i>Aythya marila</i> | A |
| Lesser Scaup | <i>Aythya affinis</i> | BBRC |
| Common Eider | <i>Somateria mollissima</i> | A, N |
| King Eider | <i>Somateria spectabilis</i> | BBRC |
| Long-tailed Duck | <i>Clangula hyemalis</i> | A, N |
| Common Scoter | <i>Melanitta nigra</i> | A |
| Velvet Scoter | <i>Melanitta fusca</i> | A, D |
| Common Goldeneye | <i>Bucephala clangula</i> | A |
| Smew | <i>Mergellus albellus</i> | A |
| Red-breasted Merganser | <i>Mergus serrator</i> | A |
| Goosander | <i>Mergus merganser</i> | A |
| Ruddy Duck | <i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i> | A, B, ST |
| Red-legged Partridge | <i>Alectoris rufa</i> | A |
| Grey Partridge | <i>Perdix perdix</i> | A |
| Quail | <i>Coturnix coturnix</i> | A |
| Pheasant | <i>Phasianus colchicus</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Red-throated Diver | <i>Gavia stellata</i> | A, N |
| Black-throated Diver | <i>Gavia arctica</i> | A, N |
| Great Northern Diver | <i>Gavia immer</i> | A |
| Pied-billed Grebe | <i>Podilymbus podiceps</i> | BBRC |
| Little Grebe | <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Great Crested Grebe | <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Red-necked Grebe | <i>Podiceps grisegena</i> | A |
| Slavonian Grebe | <i>Podiceps auritus</i> | A |

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|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Black-necked Grebe | <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i> | A |
| Fulmar | <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> | A, D |
| Manx Shearwater | <i>Puffinus puffinus</i> | A, D |
| Balearic Shearwater | <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i> | A, D |
| Barolo Shearwater | <i>Puffinus baroli</i> | BBRC |
| European Storm-petrel | <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i> | A, D |
| Leach's Storm-petrel | <i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i> | A, D |
| Gannet | <i>Morus bassanus</i> | A, N |
| Cormorant | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Shag | <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> | A |
| Bittern | <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> | A |
| Little Bittern | <i>Ixobrychus minutus</i> | BBRC |
| Night Heron | <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> | A, D |
| Squacco Heron | <i>Ardeola ralloides</i> | BBRC |
| Cattle Egret | <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> | A, D |
| Little Egret | <i>Egretta garzetta</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Great Egret | <i>Ardea alba</i> | A, D |
| Grey Heron | <i>Ardea cinerea</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Purple Heron | <i>Ardea purpurea</i> | A, D |
| Black Stork | <i>Ciconia nigra</i> | BBRC |
| White Stork | <i>Ciconia ciconia</i> | A, D |
| Glossy Ibis | <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i> | BBRC |
| Spoonbill | <i>Platalea leucorodia</i> | A, D |
| Honey Buzzard | <i>Pernis apivorus</i> | A, D |
| Black Kite | <i>Milvus migrans</i> | A, D |
| Red Kite | <i>Milvus milvus</i> | A |
| White-tailed Eagle | <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> | A, D |
| Marsh Harrier | <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> | A |
| Hen Harrier | <i>Circus cyaneus</i> | A, D away from Lower Thames |
| Montagu's Harrier | <i>Circus pygargus</i> | A, D |
| Goshawk | <i>Accipiter g entilis</i> | A, D |
| Sparrowhawk | <i>Accipiter nisus</i> | A |
| Common Buzzard | <i>Buteo buteo</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Rough-legged Buzzard | <i>Buteo lagopus</i> | A, D |
| Golden Eagle* | <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> | A, D |
| Osprey | <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> | A |
| Lesser Kestrel | <i>Falco naumanni</i> | BBRC |
| Kestrel | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Red-footed Falcon | <i>Falco vespertinus</i> | A, D |
| Merlin | <i>Falco columbarius</i> | A, N away from Lower Thames |
| Hobby | <i>Falco subbuteo</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Gyr Falcon | <i>Falco rusticolus</i> | BBRC |
| Peregrine Falcon | <i>Falco peregrinus</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Water Rail | <i>Rallus aquaticus</i> | A |
| Spotted Crane | <i>Porzana porzana</i> | A, D |
| Little Crane* | <i>Porzana parva</i> | BBRC |
| Baillon's Crane* | <i>Porzana pusilla</i> | BBRC |
| Corncrake | <i>Crex crex</i> | A, D |

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|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Moorhen | <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Coot | <i>Fulica atra</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Common Crane | <i>Grus grus</i> | A, D |
| Great Bustard* | <i>Otis tarda</i> | BBRC |
| Oystercatcher | <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> | A |
| Black-winged Stilt | <i>Himantopus himantopus</i> | BBRC |
| Avocet | <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> | A |
| Stone-curlew | <i>Burhinus oediceumus</i> | A, D |
| Cream-coloured Courser* | <i>Cursorius cursor</i> | BBRC |
| Collared Pratincole | <i>Glareola pratincola</i> | BBRC |
| Little Ringed Plover | <i>Charadrius dubius</i> | A |
| Ringed Plover | <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> | A |
| Killdeer | <i>Charadrius vociferus</i> | BBRC |
| Kentish Plover | <i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i> | A, D |
| Dotterel | <i>Charadrius morinellus</i> | A, D |
| American Golden Plover | <i>Pluvialis dominica</i> | A, D |
| Pacific Golden Plover* | <i>Pluvialis fulva</i> | BBRC |
| European Golden Plover | <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> | A |
| Grey Plover | <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> | A |
| Sociable Lapwing | <i>Vanellus gregarius</i> | BBRC |
| Northern Lapwing | <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> | MM, NR, P, B |
| Knot | <i>Calidris canutus</i> | A |
| Sanderling | <i>Calidris alba</i> | A |
| Western Sandpiper | <i>Calidris mauri</i> | BBRC |
| Little Stint | <i>Calidris minuta</i> | A |
| Temminck's Stint | <i>Calidris temminckii</i> | A, D |
| White-rumped Sandpiper | <i>Calidris fuscicollis</i> | A, D |
| Baird's Sandpiper | <i>Calidris bairdii</i> | BBRC |
| Pectoral Sandpiper | <i>Calidris melanotos</i> | A, D |
| Sharp-tailed Sandpiper | <i>Calidris acuminata</i> | BBRC |
| Curlew Sandpiper | <i>Calidris ferruginea</i> | A |
| Purple Sandpiper | <i>Calidris maritima</i> | A, D |
| Dunlin | <i>Calidris alpina</i> | MM, NR, P, S |
| Broad-billed Sandpiper | <i>Limicola falcinellus</i> | BBRC |
| Buff-breasted Sandpiper | <i>Tryngites subruficollis</i> | A, D |
| Ruff | <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> | A |
| Jack Snipe | <i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i> | A |
| Common Snipe | <i>Gallinago gallinago</i> | MM, NR, P, S |
| Great Snipe | <i>Gallinago media</i> | BBRC |
| Long-billed Dowitcher | <i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i> | BBRC |
| Woodcock | <i>Scolopax rusticola</i> | A |
| Black-tailed Godwit | <i>Limosa limosa</i> | A |
| Bar-tailed Godwit | <i>Limosa lapponica</i> | A |
| Whimbrel | <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> | A |
| Curlew | <i>Numenius arquata</i> | A |
| Common Sandpiper | <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> | A |
| Spotted Sandpiper | <i>Actitis macularius</i> | BBRC |
| Green Sandpiper | <i>Tringa ochropus</i> | A |

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|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Solitary Sandpiper | <i>Tringa solitaria</i> | BBRC |
| Spotted Redshank | <i>Tringa erythropus</i> | A |
| Greenshank | <i>Tringa nebularia</i> | A |
| Lesser Yellowlegs | <i>Tringa flavipes</i> | BBRC |
| Marsh Sandpiper | <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i> | BBRC |
| Wood Sandpiper | <i>Tringa glareola</i> | A |
| Redshank | <i>Tringa totanus</i> | MM, NR, P, S |
| Turnstone | <i>Arenaria interpres</i> | A |
| Wilson's Phalarope | <i>Phalaropus tricolor</i> | BBRC |
| Red-necked Phalarope | <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i> | A, D |
| Grey Phalarope | <i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i> | A, D |
| Pomarine Skua | <i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i> | A, D |
| Arctic Skua | <i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i> | A, D away from Lower Thames |
| Long-tailed Skua | <i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i> | A, D |
| Great Skua | <i>Stercorarius skua</i> | A, D |
| Sabine's Gull | <i>Xema sabini</i> | A, D |
| Kittiwake | <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> | A |
| Bonaparte's Gull | <i>Chroicocephalus philadelphia</i> | BBRC |
| Black-headed Gull | <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Little Gull | <i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i> | A |
| Laughing Gull | <i>Larus atricilla</i> | BBRC |
| Franklin's Gull | <i>Larus pipixcan</i> | BBRC |
| Mediterranean Gull | <i>Larus melanocephalus</i> | A |
| Common Gull | <i>Larus canus</i> | MM, ST |
| Ring-billed Gull | <i>Larus delawarensis</i> | A, D |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | <i>Larus fuscus</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Herring Gull | <i>Larus argentatus</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Yellow-legged Gull | <i>Larus michahellis</i> | A |
| Caspian Gull | <i>Larus cachinnans</i> | A, D |
| Iceland Gull | <i>Larus glaucooides</i> | A, D away from Rainham or Beddington |
| Glaucous-winged Gull | <i>Larus glaucescens</i> | BBRC |
| Glaucous Gull | <i>Larus hyperboreus</i> | A, D away from Rainham or Beddington |
| Great Black-backed Gull | <i>Larus marinus</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Sooty Tern | <i>Onychoprion fuscatus</i> | BBRC |
| Bridled Tern | <i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i> | BBRC |
| Little Tern | <i>Sternula albifrons</i> | A |
| Gull-billed Tern | <i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i> | BBRC |
| Caspian Tern | <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i> | BBRC |
| Whiskered Tern | <i>Chlidonias hybrida</i> | BBRC |
| Black Tern | <i>Chlidonias niger</i> | A |
| White-winged Black Tern | <i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i> | A, D |
| Sandwich Tern | <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> | A |
| Common Tern | <i>Sterna hirundo</i> | MM, NR, B, F&L, P, ST |
| Roseate Tern | <i>Sterna dougallii</i> | A, D |
| Arctic Tern | <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> | A |
| Common Guillemot | <i>Uria aalge</i> | A, D |

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|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Razorbill | <i>Alca torda</i> | A, D |
| Little Auk | <i>Alle alle</i> | A, D |
| Puffin | <i>Fratercula arctica</i> | A, D |
| Pallas's Sandgrouse | <i>Syrrhaptes paradoxus</i> | BBRC |
| Rock Dove | <i>Columba livia</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Stock Dove | <i>Columba oenas</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Woodpigeon | <i>Columba palumbus</i> | MM, B, ST, P |
| Collared Dove | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Turtle Dove | <i>Streptopelia turtur</i> | A |
| Ring-necked Parakeet | <i>Psittacula krameri</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Cuckoo | <i>Cuculus canorus</i> | A, F&L |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo | <i>Coccyzus americanus</i> | BBRC |
| Barn Owl | <i>Tyto alba</i> | A |
| Scops Owl* | <i>Otus scops</i> | BBRC |
| Snowy Owl | <i>Bubo scandiacus</i> | BBRC |
| Little Owl | <i>Athene noctua</i> | A |
| Tawny Owl | <i>Strix aluco</i> | A |
| Long-eared Owl | <i>Asio otus</i> | A |
| Short-eared Owl | <i>Asio flammeus</i> | A |
| Tengmalm's Owl* | <i>Aegolius funereus</i> | BBRC |
| European Nightjar | <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i> | A, N |
| Common Nighthawk | <i>Chordeiles minor</i> | BBRC |
| Common Swift | <i>Apus apus</i> | MM, B, P, F&L, ST |
| Alpine Swift | <i>Apus melba</i> | A, D |
| Kingfisher | <i>Alcedo atthis</i> | T |
| European Bee-eater | <i>Merops apiaster</i> | A, D |
| European Roller | <i>Coracias garrulus</i> | BBRC |
| Hoopoe | <i>Upupa epops</i> | A, D |
| Wryneck | <i>Jynx torquilla</i> | A, D |
| Green Woodpecker | <i>Picus viridis</i> | T |
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | <i>Dendrocopos major</i> | T |
| Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | <i>Dendrocopos minor</i> | T |
| Short-toed Lark | <i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i> | A, D |
| Crested Lark | <i>Galerida cristata</i> | BBRC |
| Woodlark | <i>Lullula arborea</i> | A |
| Skylark | <i>Alauda arvensis</i> | A, B, P, W |
| Shore Lark | <i>Eremophila alpestris</i> | A, D |
| Sand Martin | <i>Riparia riparia</i> | MM, NR, B, F&L, P, ST |
| Swallow | <i>Hirundo rustica</i> | MM, NR, B, F&L, P, ST |
| House Martin | <i>Delichon urbicum</i> | MM, NR, B, F&L, P, ST |
| Red-rumped Swallow | <i>Cecropis daurica</i> | A, D |
| Richard's Pipit | <i>Anthus richardi</i> | A, D |
| Tawny Pipit | <i>Anthus campestris</i> | A, D |
| Olive-backed Pipit | <i>Anthus hodgsoni</i> | BBRC |
| Tree Pipit | <i>Anthus trivialis</i> | A |
| Meadow Pipit | <i>Anthus pratensis</i> | MM, NR, B, W, P, ST |
| Red-throated Pipit | <i>Anthus cervinus</i> | A, D |
| Rock Pipit | <i>Anthus petrosus</i> | A |

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|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Water Pipit | <i>Anthus spinoletta</i> | A |
| Yellow Wagtail | <i>Motacilla flava</i> | A |
| Citrine Wagtail | <i>Motacilla citreola</i> | BBRC |
| Grey Wagtail | <i>Motacilla cinerea</i> | MM, NR, B, W, ST |
| Pied Wagtail | <i>Motacilla alba</i> | MM, NR, B, ST |
| Waxwing | <i>Bombycilla garrulus</i> | A |
| Dipper | <i>Cinclus cinclus</i> | A, D |
| Wren | <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> | MM, T, ST |
| Dunnock | <i>Prunella modularis</i> | MM, T, ST |
| Alpine Accentor* | <i>Prunella collaris</i> | BBRC |
| Robin | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> | MM, T, ST |
| Nightingale | <i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i> | A |
| Bluethroat | <i>Luscinia svecica</i> | A, D |
| Black Redstart | <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i> | A |
| Common Redstart | <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i> | A |
| Whinchat | <i>Saxicola rubetra</i> | A |
| European Stonechat | <i>Saxicola rubicola</i> | A |
| Northern Wheatear | <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i> | A |
| Desert Wheatear | <i>Oenanthe deserti</i> | BBRC |
| Grey-cheeked Thrush | <i>Catharus minimus</i> | BBRC |
| Ring Ouzel | <i>Turdus torquatus</i> | A |
| Blackbird | <i>Turdus merula</i> | MM, T, ST |
| Naumann's Thrush | <i>Turdus naumanni</i> | BBRC |
| Fieldfare | <i>Turdus pilaris</i> | MM, NR, F&L, P |
| Song Thrush | <i>Turdus philomelos</i> | MM, NR, P, T, ST |
| Redwing | <i>Turdus iliacus</i> | MM, NR, F&L, P |
| Mistle Thrush | <i>Turdus viscivorus</i> | MM, NR, P, T, ST |
| American Robin | <i>Turdus migratorius</i> | BBRC |
| Cetti's Warbler | <i>Cettia cetti</i> | A |
| Grasshopper Warbler | <i>Locustella naevia</i> | A |
| Savi's Warbler | <i>Locustella luscinioides</i> | BBRC |
| Aquatic Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i> | A, D |
| Sedge Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i> | MM, NR, T, F&L, ST |
| Paddyfield Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus agricola</i> | BBRC |
| Blyth's Reed Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus dumetorum</i> | BBRC |
| Marsh Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus palustris</i> | A, D |
| Reed Warbler | <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i> | MM, NR, T, F&L, ST |
| Icterine Warbler | <i>Hippolais icterina</i> | A, D |
| Melodious Warbler | <i>Hippolais polyglotta</i> | A, D |
| Blackcap | <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> | MM, NR, F&L, T, B, ST, W |
| Garden Warbler | <i>Sylvia borin</i> | A, F&L, T |
| Barred Warbler | <i>Sylvia nisoria</i> | A, D |
| Lesser Whitethroat | <i>Sylvia curruca</i> | MM, NR, F&L, T, B, ST |
| Common Whitethroat | <i>Sylvia communis</i> | MM, NR, F&L, T, B, ST |
| Dartford Warbler | <i>Sylvia undata</i> | A |
| Subalpine Warbler | <i>Sylvia cantillans</i> | A, D |
| Sardinian Warbler | <i>Sylvia melanocephala</i> | BBRC |
| Pallas's Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i> | A, D |

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|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yellow-browed Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i> | A, D |
| Hume's Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus humei</i> | BBRC |
| Radde's Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i> | A, D |
| Wood Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i> | A |
| Common Chiffchaff | <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> | MM, NR, F&L, T, ST, W |
| Iberian Chiffchaff | <i>Phylloscopus ibericus</i> | BBRC |
| Willow Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i> | A, F&L, T |
| Goldcrest | <i>Regulus regulus</i> | MM, NR, T, ST, W |
| Firecrest | <i>Regulus ignicapilla</i> | A |
| Spotted Flycatcher | <i>Muscicapa striata</i> | A |
| Red-breasted Flycatcher | <i>Ficedula parva</i> | A, D |
| Pied Flycatcher | <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i> | A |
| Bearded Tit | <i>Panurus biarmicus</i> | A |
| Long-tailed Tit | <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i> | MM, NR, T, ST, W |
| Blue Tit | <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i> | MM, T, ST |
| Great Tit | <i>Parus major</i> | MM, T, ST |
| Crested Tit | <i>Lophophanes cristatus</i> | A, D |
| Coal Tit | <i>Periparus ater</i> | MM, NR, T, ST |
| Willow Tit | <i>Poecile montana</i> | A, N |
| Marsh Tit | <i>Poecile palustris</i> | A |
| Nuthatch | <i>Sitta europaea</i> | T |
| Treecreeper | <i>Certhia familiaris</i> | T |
| Short-toed Treecreeper | <i>Certhia brachydactyla</i> | BBRC |
| Penduline Tit | <i>Remiz pendulinus</i> | BBRC |
| Golden Oriole | <i>Oriolus oriolus</i> | A, D |
| Brown Shrike | <i>Lanius cristatus</i> | BBRC |
| Isabelline Shrike | <i>Lanius isabellinus</i> | BBRC |
| Red-backed Shrike | <i>Lanius collurio</i> | A, D |
| Lesser Grey Shrike | <i>Lanius minor</i> | BBRC |
| Great Grey Shrike | <i>Lanius excubitor</i> | A, D |
| Woodchat Shrike | <i>Lanius senator</i> | A, D |
| Jay | <i>Garrulus glandarius</i> | MM, NR, B, P, ST |
| Magpie | <i>Pica pica</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Nutcracker | <i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i> | BBRC |
| Jackdaw | <i>Corvus monedula</i> | MM, NR, B, P, ST |
| Rook | <i>Corvus frugilegus</i> | MM, NR, B, P |
| Carrion Crow | <i>Corvus corone</i> | MM, B, ST |
| Hooded Crow | <i>Corvus cornix</i> | A, N |
| Raven | <i>Corvus corax</i> | A |
| Starling | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> | MM, B, P, ST |
| Rose-coloured Starling | <i>Sturnus roseus</i> | A, D |
| House Sparrow | <i>Passer domesticus</i> | MM, NR, B, P, ST |
| Tree Sparrow | <i>Passer montanus</i> | A |
| Chaffinch | <i>Fringilla coelebs</i> | MM, B, P, ST |
| Brambling | <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i> | A |
| Serin | <i>Serinus serinus</i> | A, D |
| Greenfinch | <i>Carduelis chloris</i> | MM, NR, B, P, ST |
| Goldfinch | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> | MM, NR, B, P, ST |

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|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Siskin | <i>Carduelis spinus</i> | MM, NR, P, S |
| Linnet | <i>Carduelis cannabina</i> | MM, NR, B, W |
| Twite | <i>Carduelis flavirostris</i> | A, D |
| Lesser Redpoll | <i>Carduelis cabaret</i> | MM, NR, P, S |
| Mealy Redpoll | <i>Carduelis flammea</i> | A |
| Arctic Redpoll | <i>Carduelis hornemanni</i> | A, D |
| Two-barred Crossbill* | <i>Loxia leucoptera</i> | BBRC |
| Common Crossbill | <i>Loxia curvirostra</i> | A |
| Parrot Crossbill* | <i>Loxia pytyopsittacus</i> | A, D |
| Common Rosefinch | <i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i> | A, D |
| Pine Grosbeak* | <i>Pinicola enucleator</i> | BBRC |
| Bullfinch | <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> | A, B, ST |
| Hawfinch | <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i> | A |
| Lapland Bunting | <i>Calcarius lapponicus</i> | A, D |
| Snow Bunting | <i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i> | A, N |
| Pine Bunting | <i>Emberiza leucocephalos</i> | BBRC |
| Yellowhammer | <i>Emberiza citrinella</i> | A |
| Cirl Bunting | <i>Emberiza cirlus</i> | A, D |
| Ortolan Bunting | <i>Emberiza hortulana</i> | A, D |
| Rustic Bunting | <i>Emberiza rustica</i> | A, D |
| Little Bunting | <i>Emberiza pusilla</i> | A, D |
| Reed Bunting | <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i> | MM, NR, T, P, ST |
| Black-headed Bunting | <i>Emberiza melanocephala</i> | BBRC |
| Corn Bunting | <i>Emberiza calandra</i> | A |

In addition to the above, full descriptions are required for all species assessed by the British Birds Rarities Committee. Description forms are available from the Editor or Recorders on request. All records of escapes are also welcomed by the Society. All records of hybrids and birds showing plumage aberrance are also required.

Subspecies

All records of subspecies/races are wanted. Full descriptions are required for the following: White Wagtail in autumn; Yellow Wagtail races other than *M. f. flavissima* and spring records of Blue-headed Wagtail; Siberian Chiffchaff; Northern Willow Warbler; Continental Coal Tit and Northern Bullfinch. For other subspecies please provide your reasons for assigning the record to a particular subspecies/race.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all contributors for their records. Without your enthusiastic support we could not produce the annual *London Bird Report*.

Pete Lambert, on behalf of the Editorial Board, June 2012.

BREEDING CRITERIA

When sending in breeding records, please enter: 'possible breeding', 'probable breeding' or 'confirmed breeding' in the Comments section on the electronic records form according to the definitions below. Additional information can also be given, such as number of territories, broods, nests, young fledged etc.

Possible breeding

- Species observed in breeding season in suitable nesting habitat
- Singing male present (or breeding calls heard) in breeding season in suitable habitat

Probable breeding

- Pair observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season
- Permanent territory presumed on at least two different days, a week or more apart
- Courtship and display (judged to be in or near potential breeding habitat)
- Visiting probable nest-site
- Agitated behaviour or anxiety calls from adults, suggesting nest or young near by
- Brood patch on adult examined in the hand, suggesting incubation
- Nest-building or excavating nest-hole

Confirmed breeding

- Distraction-display or injury-feigning
- Used nest or eggshells found (occupied or laid within period of survey)
- Recently-fledged young (for warblers and other birds whose young are fed at the nest for some time after hatching, 'nidicolous species') or downy young (for ducks and other birds where the young leave the nest soon after hatching, 'nidifugous species')
- Adults entering or leaving nest-site in circumstances indicating occupied nest
- Adult carrying faecal sac or food for young
- Nest containing eggs
- Nest with young seen or heard

The above breeding categories are as used in the BTO Atlas project.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The Editorial Board welcomes papers, short notes, photographs and drawings relating to the ornithology of the London Area and will be pleased to advise authors on the acceptability of material at draft stage if desired.

PAPERS should be submitted to the Papers Editor: Mike Trier, 38 Maury Road, London N16 7BP, email: miketrier@waitrose.com, tel: 020 8806 7656.

Texts should be sent as RTF file attachments to an email. The dates of all records included should be no later than the nominal year of publication. Printed text (hard copy) can be scanned; please contact the Papers Editor first before submitting it.

Style English names of birds require initial capitals except after a hyphen, but group names, animals and flowers do not. Scientific names should be in italics, but only the first (generic) name should have an initial capital; their use in the text is optional. Dates should take the form Jan 1st 2004; numbers under 11 should be spelt out in text; fractions should be decimalised. Full points should be omitted from well-known initials, such as BTO, LNHS and RSPB, and also from 'eg', 'ie' and 'et al'. Speech quotation marks should be double; all others should be single. Systematic lists within papers should be in the order of Checklist of Birds of the London Area, and in the following format for economy of space:

Common name: Description etc.

Scientific name (except optionally in the Ringing Report) is not required.

References to publications should be given in full, with the name spelt out and in italics, and in the following style:

HARRISON, J., & GRANT, P.J., 1976. *The Thames Transformed*. London.

MOON, A.V., 1988. The influx of Sabine's Gulls and other Seabirds in October 1987. *Lond. Bird Rep.* 52: 121-132.

Illustrations Figures and graphs in papers are welcomed. Graphs should be embedded in the text document. Digital figures (maps etc) should be sent as separate files, with their position indicated in the text. Some figures can be originated by the Papers Editor from hard copy: contact him first for guidance.

Proofs and Reprints Authors of papers and short notes will be sent proofs, if requested, but only printers' mistakes may be changed at this stage. Up to two free reprints of papers are provided if ordered by authors in advance; larger quantities are charged at cost.

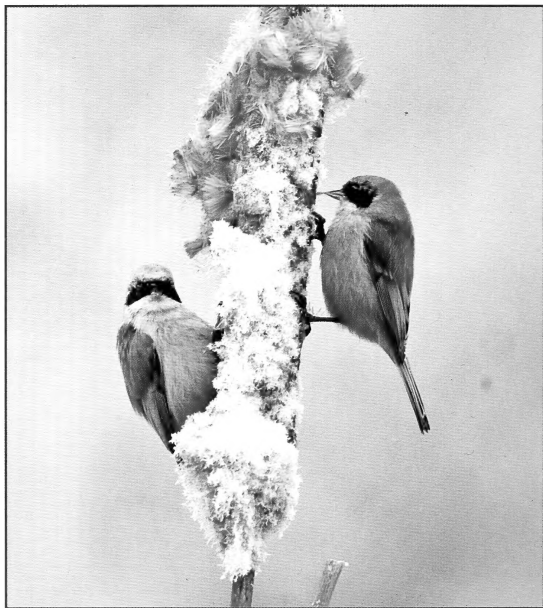
PHOTOGRAPHS should be submitted to the Photographic Editor: Dominic Mitchell, c/o Birdwatch, Solo Publishing Ltd, B403A The Chocolate Factory, 5 Clarendon Road, London, N22 6XJ, email: dominic.mitchell@yahoo.co.uk, tel: 020 8881 0550.

Digital photographs should be unedited and uncropped original files and can be submitted on a CD/DVD or as email attachments (10 MB maximum per email). Each image should be accompanied by full details including species name, location, date and photographer's name - and postal address for any material that needs returning. **Prints and transparencies** must be packed in a board-backed envelope or otherwise protected to prevent damage.

LINE DRAWINGS should be submitted to the Chair, Pete Lambert, 109 Gloucester Road, London, E17 6AF, email: plamb@phonecoop.coop, tel: 020 8531 9814.

They may be submitted as digital files (by email or on CD) or as hard-copy, suitably protected if posting.

Despite their status as a national rarity Penduline Tits continued to make intermittent appearances at Rainham Marshes RSPB, making this site the most reliable for the species in Britain. These two males were present on a number of dates in early January. (Steve Young/www.birdsonfilm.com)



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London
Natural
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Published September 2012
© London Natural History Society
www.lnhs.org.uk
Price £8.00



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CBP00010182108124621

ISBN 978-0-9010093-2-6



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